UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

THE CHALLENGES FACED BY AFRICAN WOMEN IN MANAGEMENT: A CASE OF THE NATIONAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION

By

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Declaration

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Abstract

At the dawn of the new South Africa (SA), the introduction of many policies and strategies that included new employment and labour laws aimed at transforming the country resulted in an increased number of African women employed in all sectors of the economy. Since the new dispensation, supporting policies and laws, more and more black women have taken up management positions in various organisations. However, there are not sufficient women in management. Those that aspire to management positions and or are already in management continue to face several challenges. If SA is to fast track its transformation agenda with even more women taking up management positions and rising through the ranks, it is important to understand and address the challenges and or barriers that they face as managers, and of course to propose solutions to these challenges. The main objectives for this study were to investigate the barriers that prevent African women from entering into management, and to investigate the challenges they encounter once they are in these positions. To address this problem, an exploratory and case study approach was used. An interview based survey was conducted with eleven out of fifteen African women managers at the National Research Foundation (NRF), the remaining four were not available for the interviews. Before the interviews, the researcher firstly discussed the motivation for the study with the aim of ensuring clarity and understanding. Due to the fact that the study was exploratory, data was collected using qualitative method. Thematic analysis was used to analyse data. The findings of this study supported the assumption that there are barriers that prevent African women from occupying managerial positions. These barriers include; the perceived unwillingness of the organisation to promote diversity in the workplace, the 'think manager-think male' stereotype, the issue of not having enough qualifications and skills, conflicting roles, glass ceiling and the SA history of apartheid and patriarchy. It was also revealed that once African women finally progress to these positions they face challenges; they are not acknowledged and respected as their male counter parts. African women sometimes find it difficult to maintain balance between responsibilities at work and at home. The above-mentioned findings imply that African women are still underrepresented at management level. The existing literature attempted to compare the experiences of African women and white women management and discovered that their experiences are not the same.

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Abbreviations

AA	Affirmative Action
ARIC	Applied Research Innovation and Collaboration
BWASA	Businesswomen's Association of South Africa
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
EEA	Employment Equity Act
GMSA	Grants Management Systems Administration
HICD	Human and Infrastructure Capacity Development
IR&C	International Relations and corporate
KFD	Knowledge Fields Development
BME	Black and Minority Ethnicity
MD	Managing Director
NRF	National Research Foundation
RAO	Radio Astronomy Observatory
RCCE	Research Chairs and Centres of Excellence
RE	Reviews and evaluations
RISA	Research and Innovation Support and Advancement
SA	South Africa
SAAO	South African Astronomical Observatory
SAEON	South African Environmental Observation Network
SARIMA	Southern African Research and Innovation Management Association
SAIB	South African Institute for Aquatic Biodiversity
UK	United Kingdom
UKZN	University of KwaZulu-Natal
UVA	Universiteit Van Amsterdam
WBI	World Bank Institute

Dedication

This Dissertation is dedicated to my late brother Nkosinathi Nxumalo for his endless encouragement even in his last days he still had the strength to push me through my difficult days and for that I will always remember him.

CHAPTER 1

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1   Introduction

Before the shift from apartheid to a democratic government, South Africans were not afforded equal opportunities. Moumakoe (2013) argues that before 1994, the South African Public Service systematically marginalized women across the colour spectrum, this means that race and gender were the primary determinants of the opportunities that one had. After 1994, democratic government took over and required all South African citizens to be afforded equal rights and equal opportunities. According to Mello and Phago (2007), South Africa is still a young democracy grappling to redress the imbalances of the past, which were not only about colour but also about gender and many other inequities. Before 1994, women of any colour were also disadvantaged, and thus, African women experienced both racial and gender discrimination. "Black women have been constrained from entering many fields, partly because of sexual discrimination which handicaps all women, and partly because of racial discrimination which handicaps all blacks" (Bryce and Warrick,1974,17). According to Hendrickse (2004), patriarchy played a big role in influencing informal and formal human relationships and the opportunities available for women in the workplace. Mathur-Helm (2005) argues that the focus has been on correcting racial imbalances and less focus is given to gender imbalances, as a result, African women managers are still underrepresented and experiences many challenges in their managerial positions.

The new South African government introduced a number of policies with the aim of correcting the imbalances caused by apartheid government some of which had to do with race and gender in the workplace. Oosthuizen and Naidoo (2010) argued that South Africa has been trying to address

the issue of underrepresentation of women in the workplace by motivating the organisations to diversify their workforce and adopt corrective labour policies such as Employment Equity Act of 1998, Affirmative Action policies and so forth. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, the Affirmative Action and other South African policy documents, such as the White Paper on Human Resource Management of 1997 issued by the Department of Public Service and Administration were introduced as mechanisms of ensuring fair representation of individuals from designated groups in the work place. These policies were introduced in order to advance women of all races and, African people as a whole who have the right qualifications and experience to occupy managerial positions from which they were previously excluded. These policies are explained in Chapter 2. The purpose of this study was threefold, the first part of this study investigated the barriers that prevent African women from occupying managerial positions at the NRF, and the second part investigated the challenges faced by African women that are already in the managerial positions at the NRF. Lastly, this study analysed whether these challenges and barriers are linked to race and gender.

1.2 Background

According to Littrell and Nkomo (2005), cited in Farmer (2010), The SA historical racial divide was accompanied by patriarchal expectations that women of all races were expected to be subordinate to males. In addition, women of all races (African, Coloured, Indian and White) were regarded as homemakers and they were officially classified as "minors". Nonetheless, some women were employed. African, Coloured and Indian women with some education were hired primarily as teachers, nurses and social workers, the ones that possessed little or no education were employed primarily in domestic and unskilled factory jobs. On the other hand, a number of white women were employed primarily in the administrative field and occupations that are set aside for females such as secretarial and beauty therapists occupations (Littrell and Nkomo, 2005), cited in (Farmer, 2010). The aim of this study was to investigate the extent to which African women at the NRF experience challenges associated with race and gender.

The NRF is a research agency whose mandate is to promote research through funding, human development management and provision of facilities. According to National Research Foundation (2014), the outcomes of the research play a vital role in improving the country and the lives of people who live in it. The NRF was founded through the NRF Act No. 23 , 1998 and like all organisations, is guided by both national and internal policies, and among these public and laws

is policies is the Employment Equity Act which will be discussed in the literature review. This study was an exploratory study that investigated the barriers that prevent African women from entering into managerial positions in South African organisations. The NRF was used as the case study for the investigation. The study discussed the challenges faced by African women holding managerial positions at the NRF, and investigated whether these barriers and challenges are linked to race and gender. The NRF has a number of African women occupying managerial positions, hence, the researcher opted to specifically use the NRF as the study site. Due to the nature of this study, qualitative approach was used. Interviews were conducted with all African women occupying managerial positions who agreed to participate in this study.

1.3 Problem statement

Research conducted by Bell and Nkomo (2001) indicates that there are barriers that prevent African women from occupying managerial positions and that when they finally get into managerial positions they do not get recognition and acknowledgement they deserve or as that of their male counterparts. "Black women are (a) Marginalized (b) Culturally problematized and (c) Impeded in social mobility. They encounter paternalism, they are underestimated, their work is ethicised and they are generally fewer opportunities than men and white women, respectively" (Davidson,1996:51). This study sought to examine the extent to which these prejudices towards African women exists at the NRF and whether the organisation is committed to advancing African women into management positions. Many studies have been done about the challenges faced by women in managerial positions, but a few studies combined both gender and race. In the past, African people were oppressed because of their skin colour and women were crippled because of their gender (Hoyt and Blascovich, 2007, Jamali and Nejati, 2009, Mathur-Helm, 2005, Schein, 1973, Skinner, 2012). "African women possess a unique stand point because of the disadvantaged position they occupy along the race and gender axis" (Hill-Collins, 1998), cited in (Nkomo and Booysen,2010:9).

1.4 Purpose statement

Research done by Vickie Elmer in 2015 shows that a number of African women in middle management has grown at a fast pace, while the number of female Chief Executive Officers

(CEOs) in giant companies remains tremendously low. This research examined a number for explanations for why African women have not yet risen to management positions. This was done by investigating the barriers that prevent women from climbing to the level of management. According to Mello and Phago (2007), South Africa is well known for its history of institutional racism, whereby opportunities and rights depended on gender and race. This research also aimed at engaging with African women in managerial positions at the NRF in order to explore the pathways they took to acquire management positions. It is hoped that the findings and recommendations of this study will contribute to a better understanding of the complexities of transformation, contribute to development of strategies that support aspiring African women to advance to management positions. Additionally, the results of this study may also be valuable to leaders and managers to manage diversity in their organisations or businesses.

1.5 Research objectives

The rationale of this study is that South Africa need to develop better strategies to enhance transformation and in particular the ascendance of women to management positions so that they make meaningful contribution to the development of SA. To do this, SA need to develop a better understanding of and address the challenges faced by African women occupying managerial positions in various organisations like the NRF. To do this, the research study first aimed at identifying the barriers that hinder African women from entering into management and the challenges they encounter once they occupy these positions. The objectives of this study were as follows;

1. To investigate if there is lack of dedication and commitment, perceived or real, by the organisation to advance African women.

2. To examine the impact of 'glass ceiling' on African women wanting to occupy management positions at the NRF.

3. To explore the degree to which conflicting roles are a hindrance to African women managers' competence at the NRF.

4. To investigate the impact of not having enough women role models on African women managers at the NRF.

5. To investigate the extent to which the legacy of apartheid and patriarchy have an impact on the slow increase of African women occupying managerial positions at the NRF.

1.6   Research questions

In order to achieve the objectives of this study, the researcher attempted to discuss and address the following questions;

1. Does lack of dedication and commitment by the NRF, if any, have an impact on the advancement of African women into management positions?

2. What is the impact if any, of "glass ceiling" on African women occupying managerial positions at the NRF?

3. How does conflicting roles impact African women managers competence?

4. Does not having enough role models who are also women managers have an impact on African women managers at the NRF?

5. To what extent have the apartheid legacy and patriarchy contributed to slow increase of African women managers at the NRF?

1.7   The study structure

To ensure that there is unbroken continuity from one chapter to the next, each chapter is made up of introductory paragraph which states the purpose of the chapter and is followed by main body which comprise of more than two but not many sub sections which are aimed at providing in depth information on the chapter content. Lastly, the concluding summary which links a previous chapter to the next new chapter. In summary, the study is structured as follows:

1.7.1   Chapter 1

This chapter provides and details the main purpose, focus and motivation for this study. Furthermore, this chapter provides a definition of the scope of the study, objectives of the study and research questions of the study. The chapter concludes with a summary of the chapters to follow in the thesis.

1.7.2 Chapter 2

Chapter 2 provides an assessment of the relevant literature as relates to the barriers that prevent African women form occupying managerial positions and the challenges that these women encounter when they are in these positions. A theoretical background to the glass ceiling concept and its definitions are provided to give readers a better understanding of what the glass ceiling means. In addition, the magnitude of the ceiling, barriers that result in creating the ceiling, its effects and ways to counter it are discussed. This chapter also consists of a literature review that provides a review of past and current research on challenges encountered by African women in management nationally and internationally.

1.7.3 Chapter 3

Chapter 3 details the research methodology adopted in this study. The aim and objectives, data collection methods and generally the research design and methods are discussed in this chapter. The description of participants and selection criteria are explained. The ethical considerations that were taken and adhered to throughout the study are clarified.

1.7.4 Chapter 4

Chapter 4 presents the presentation and the discussion of the results. It addresses the findings according to the objectives in order to determine whether they have been met or not. A discussion of results then follows with reference to relevant literature to support research findings.

1.7.5 Chapter 5

The last chapter provides the conclusions and recommendations. The limitations of the study and implications for admission and selection procedures are provided in this chapter.

1.8 Summary of the chapter

This chapter introduced the study by outlining the background of the study, the problem statement, the research objectives, research questions, and the description of the study. This chapter served

as the summary of the chapters that are going to follow. This chapter also introduced the research topic with the aim of allowing the reader to gain more information about the study. This chapter highlighted that the South African post democratic government and the African society introduced laws that disadvantaged African women at home and at work, hence, the number of African women who are progressing to managerial positions is still low. When African women finally get these positions, they encounter prejudice and they are expected to prove that they can do the job, as a result, they have to work harder than their male counterparts.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   Introduction

The South African Government has played a big role in trying to address the imbalances of the past (Carli and Eagly, 2001). "The democratic change in government ushered in numerous changes in legislation to address all forms of inequality" (Farmer, 2013:19). South Africa has one of the most complex and diverse populations in the world which consists of Africans, Coloureds, Indians and Whites, hence it is referred to as the "Rainbow Nation". Carli and Eagly (2001) argued that even though a number of legislations are put in place with the aim of correcting historical imbalances, discrimination against women and racial discrimination still exists. "While this has become less acceptable in theory, in practice here is still an abundance of documentation that women and minorities still experience discrimination" (Carli and Eagly, 2001:50). Moumakoe (2013) argues that racial and gender discrimination are manifestations of inequality in development, as a result, there is slow promotion of African women to management.

Moumakoe (2013) further argues that gender discrimination in the workplace is caused by women exclusion in the decision making in the past. Women that are already in managerial positions do not receive equal respect and acceptance as that of men (Moumakoe, 2013). Because African women face combined discrimination, it makes it hard for them to enter into managerial positions or to be promoted to managerial positions even if their qualifications allows them (Carli and Eagly, 2001). Catalyst (2004) argues that a number of women entering into management and leadership positions slightly increased in 2004 lagging behind countries like United Kingdom and the United States. "The gender discrimination on women was filtered through a rapid system

of race discrimination so that white women would have been negatively affected, but black women would have been subjected to the combined negative impact of both gender and race discrimination" (De La Rey and Duncan, 2003:364).

Historical inequalities created a "think manager-think male" stereotype which basically excluded women from entering into managerial positions (Moumakoe, 2013). Bloch, Beoku-Betts and Tabanchnick (1998) argue that African women are too often assumed as poor, powerless and ignorant person whose life is vastly different from that of western women. De La Rey and Duncan (2003) further argue that historical inequalities accompanied by patriarchal society created a stereotype that implies that women of all races are expected to be homemakers. This chapter has covered the following topics;

1. The challenges faced by African women in management.

2. The barriers that prevent African women from occupying managerial positions.

3. Legislation and policies introduced to incorrect historical imbalances.

4. Statistical data regarding African women occupying managerial position.

2.2 Background

The Census of 2011 collected by The Businesswomen's Association of South Africa (BWASA) indicated that women's representation at the executive management level in South Africa is 21.6 %, while the percentages in Australia 8%, Canada 17.7%, the United States 14.4% and the United Kingdom 12.2% are much lower (BWASA, 2011), cited in Farmer (2010). The representation of women at the director level for 2011 was 15.8% for South Africa, whereas the percentages in Australia was 8.4%, Canada 8.9% and the United Kingdom 9% was lower overall, although the statistics from the United States 15.7% were comparable to those from South Africa. There has been a steady increase in the number of women directors since 2004 from 7.1% to 15.8% in 2011. Women in South African organisations comprised 4.4% of the Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) and Managing Directors (MDs), 5.3% of Chairpersons, 15.8% of Directors, and 21.6% of Executives, while the rest of these positions are occupied by males in 2011 (BWASA, 2011), cited in Farmer (2010).

Figure 2.1 below shows the underrepresentation of women in management positions in different types of organisations (state owned and private companies) and in different levels of management

(Directorships, Executive Managers, Chairpersons and CEO's). According to BWASA (2015), SA is still without satisfactory representation of women in JSE-listed companies. The diagram below shows that management positions are still dominated by males (BWASA, 2015).
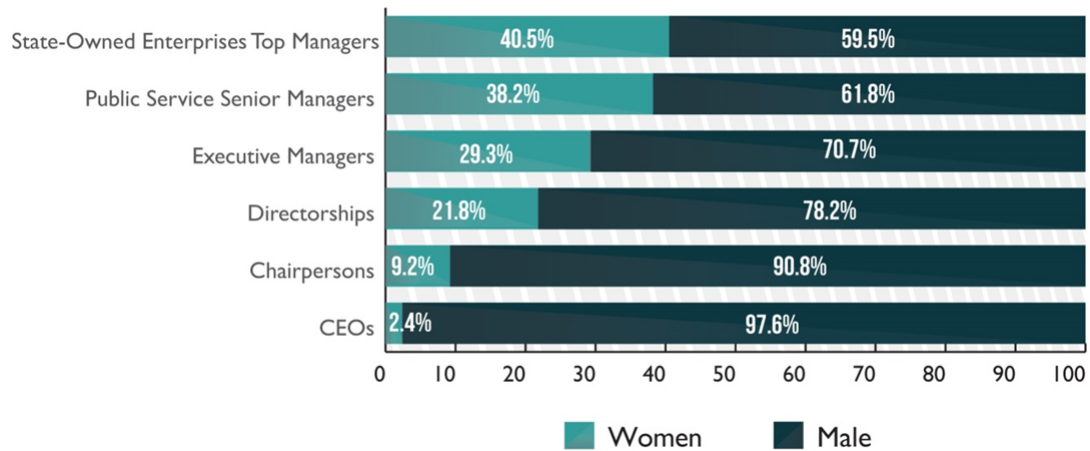
FIGURE 2.1: Women workforce representation across organisations.
Source: Businesswomen's Association of South Africa-2015

Consensus collected by the Commission for Employment Equity in Table 2.1 below indicated that African people are still underrepresented in senior management positions. The findings revealed that 70% of top management level positions were occupied by white people, while African people made 13.6%. With Coloured and Indian people holding 4.7% and 8.4% of top management level positions correspondingly.

Race	Top Management	Senior management	Professionally qualified	Skilled technical
African	13.6%	20.5%	36.7%	58.5%
White	70%	59.3%	41.9%	22.7%
Indian	8.4%	9.9%	9.1%	5.8%
Coloured	4.7%	7.2%	9.5%	5.8%
Foreign nationals	3.4%	3.1%	2.7%	1.7 %

TABLE 2.1: Representation by race.
Source: 2014/15 Commission for Employment Equity Report

Carli and Eagly (2007); Ely, Ibarra and Kolb (2011), cited in Livingston (2012) also conducted research on gender and leadership and the results indicated that women are still underrepresented in top leadership positions and repeatedly face biasness when they finally do occupy these positions. One of the well-known barriers that prevent women from occupying management positions is the fact that people do not think "female" when they think manager (Schein, 1973). Therefore, women are viewed as not fit enough to occupy management positions. To some

extent, this is due to the fact that stereotypes surrounding gender contradict manager stereotypes. Moreover, when women finally obtain management positions they are often viewed incompetent as managers (Abele, 2003).

Research done by Livingston (2012) undoubtedly indicated that women and minorities encounter difficulties that white men do not experience when entering into management. However, research also establish that the specific challenges that women and minorities face are different in nature. "White women suffer agency penalties because agentic behaviour disrupts descriptive and prescriptive stereotypes. African men suffer agency penalties because agentic behaviour is seen as a (realistic) threat to white male patriarchy, due to the perceived strength and power that black men possess" (Livingston, 2012:7). Black women are not affected by agency penalty because as opposed to white women, they are not subject to descriptive or prescriptive communal stereotypes nor do they represent the same realistic threat as that of black man (Livingston, 2012). Even though African women are not penalized for being direct and confident in their interpersonal manner, they are penalized for being "power-seeking" and "self-promoting" in their ambition. Additionally, African women are also excessively punished for making mistakes in their management role (Livingston, 2012).

As more women continue to work alongside men in professional and managerial jobs worldwide, sociologists, feminists, organisational theorists and others who study economic inequality collectively agree that any analysis of women that ignores race will render itself incomplete (Browne and Misra, 2003). Likewise, theories of racial inequality that exclude gender from their frameworks are similarly inadequate for understanding the lives of African women (Reskin and Charles, 1999). Brewer, Conrad and King (2002) agree that feminist economists are amongst those who have made progress in connecting the dynamics of gender, race and class. More needs to be done particularly in drawing attention to interconnections of gender with race and class, race with gender and class, and class with race and gender (Brewer *et al.*, 2002).

2.3 Definition of terms

2.3.1 Management

Since this study examines the challenges faced by African women managers, it is important to first establish what management is, and the responsibilities of managers in an organisation.

Management refers to the process of controlling and dealing with people or things in the organisation (Stuhlman, 2009). Hissom (2009) defines management as the organisational process that includes setting organisational objectives, taking strategic decisions, deploying financial and human assets needed to achieve organisational goals and objectives. According to Linstead, Fulop and Lilley (2004), cited in Ramazan (2010), management can be clearly defined as a relation and differential activities that are inclusive of people as resources that are considered as human resources. Ramazan (2010) argues that leadership and management should go hand in hand.

2.3.2 Manager

A *manager* is a person responsible for directing the group of people, for planning, and for monitoring the staff and taking corrective action when needed (Kotter, 2001). In addition, Kotter (2001) defines a manager as an organisational member who enables and encourages subordinates. Ramazan (2010) defines a manager as someone who is willing to take risks, hard worker, and a person who is able to direct people to the right direction. Prior to 1994, African people were not allowed to occupy managerial positions, the apartheid government introduced boundaries, certain jobs were given to African people and the management jobs were allocated for white people (Bell, Denton and Nkomo, 2003). "A Manager is like an orchestra conductor who plays no instrument but makes the music. The position wields power and authority both of which have denied African women in any meaningful way" (Bell *et al.*, 2003:2). According to Griffin (2000), a manager is a person who is essentially responsible for understanding management process. Particularly a manager is the person responsible for making plans and decisions, organising, supervising, budgeting and controlling staff and finances (Griffin, 2000).

2.3.3 Diversity

Mazur (2010) defines *diversity* as an individual phenomenon that is created by a collection of members themselves who on the basis of their diverse social individualities categorise others as dissimilar or similar. "Diversity can be defined as acknowledging, understanding, accepting, and valuing differences among people with respect to age, class, race, ethnicity, gender, disabilities, etc." (Esty, Griffin and Hirsh, 1995:54). Similarly Duren and Associates (2002:54) defines diversity as "human attributes that are different from your own and from those of groups to which you belong" O'Reilly, Wlliams and Barsade (1997:186) argue that "A group is diverse if

it is composed of individuals who differ on a characteristic on which they base their own social identity." Loden and Rosener (1991) provides a similar definition and defines diversity as that which distinguishes one group of people from another along primary and secondary dimensions.

2.3.4 Affirmative Action

According to Crosby and Cordova (1996), cited in Crosby, Iyer and Sincharoen (2006), *Affirmative Action* only takes place whenever an organisation dedicates its resources to make sure that individuals are not discriminated because of their race, gender and other differences. Crosby and Cordova (1996) argue that Affirmative Action has the same objective as Employment Equity Act which seeks to ensure that diversity is correctly managed and discrimination is not allowed once it is discovered. In comparison to Employment Equity Act, Affirmative Action organisations make use of recognised practices not only to undermine but to also prevent discrimination. "Affirmative Action is a policy or program that seeks to redress past discrimination through active measures, sometimes including preferential treatment, to ensure equal opportunity for persons in protected groups" (Deane, 2009:93). The Affirmative Action Policy is meant to address and eliminate all forms discrimination in the workplace and to ensure that everyone stands equal chance of being promoted to management positions Deane (2009). "Affirmative Action means all actions and interventions to eliminate past racial and gender imbalances, overcome barriers to equal employment opportunity, mobilize latent human resources and to offer opportunities for advancement to the previously disadvantaged in a planned and accelerated way" (Department of Road and Transport, 1998:3).

2.3.5 Race

Wolf (2017) defines *race* as a socially built artefact that classifies people based on visual differences which are imputed to indicate imperceptible differences. Wolf (2017) argue that these classifications do not provide clear structure of focus and fluid over time which imitates their social rather than physical basis. Its importance arises out of the meanings the societies allocates to it, and the way the society structures race. Vogel and Motulsky (1986) define race as a big population of people who possess important parts of their genes in common and can be differentiated from other races by their shared gene pool. Fish (2013) similarly defines race as a group of people which are significantly different from other human populations in regard to the frequency of one or more of the genes it possesses. "It is concluded that race may be

defined as a rough measure of genetic distance in human populations and as such may function as an informational construct in the multidisciplinary area of research in human biology" (Baker, 1967:21).

Fish (2013) further explains that this is when the members of a population differentiate themselves form other groups. Prewitt (2013) argues that race is a great separation of mankind. Race is a socially built artefact that classifies persons grounded on visual differences which are imputed to specify imperceptible differences (Prewitt, 2013). "These categorizations are amorphous and fluid over time which reflects their social rather than physical basis" (Wolf, 20 17:1). Acker (2016) defines race as the socially defined differences which are based on physical characteristics, historical domination, culture and oppression, with ethnicity accompanying race. Acker (2016), cited in Farmer (2010), argues that race is more integrated into class hierarchies than gender. Santos, Palomares, Normando and Quintao (2010) argue that people define race d ifferently. A number of authors have discovered that race is an unscientific t erm, w hich c an o nly h ave a biological meaning when the human being is fully homogeneous or "thoroughbred", as in some animal species (Santos *et al.*, 2010).

2.3.6   Gender

According to Ramazan (2010), human beings are either male or female. Ramazan (2010) further argues that *gender* alone is a very powerful role which is not only important in everyday lives but also equally important to the organisations. Holmes (2007) defines gender as the difference between being masculine or being feminine. "gender issues are to be understood as a central feature of patriarchy, social systems in which men have come to be dominant in relation to women" (Holmes, 2007:2). Acker (2016:444) defines gender as "socially constructed differences between men and women as the beliefs and identities that support difference and inequality" Acker (2016), cited in Farmer (2010) further argues that not so long ago gender was wholly integrated to class in many organisations; this means that men mainly held most managerial positions whereas women held lower-level white collar jobs. Likewise, Schein (1973) also argued that masculinist construction of management did not work in favour of women.

2.3.7 Barrier

Hollnagel (1999) defines a ***barrier***, as an obstacle, an obstruction, or a hindrance that may either prevent an action from being carried out or an event from taking place, or prevent or lessen the impact of the consequences, for instance by slowing down the uncontrolled release of matter and energy, limiting the reach of the consequences or weakening them in other ways. "Others contend that an entry barrier is anything that hinders entry and has the effect of reducing or limiting competition" (Hollnagel, 1999:1). This research studies the barriers that prevent African women from occupying managerial positions at the NRF.

2.3.8 Stereotypes

Macrae, Stangor and Hewstone (1996) defines stereotype as people's point of views about a certain group, for example black people, white people, males, females. Stereotypes are measured to be pictures in the head of individuals looking into their social worlds (Macrae *et al.*, 1996). According to Hinton (2010), stereotype refers to a situation where a group of people are identified by a specific characteristic. Stereotypes are the beliefs people hold about the characteristics of a particular group of people (Hinton, 2010). Blum (2004) defines stereotype as misleading beliefs about groups. In doing so, (Blum, 2004:251) "stereotypes powerfully shape the stereotype's perception of stereotyped groups, seeing the stereotypic characteristics when they are not present, failing to see the contrary of those characteristics when they are not present, failing to see the contrary of those characteristics when they are and generally homogenizing the group."

2.3.9 African Women

The term ***African women*** refers to all women who were born, lived and who belong to Africa continent. As result, their culture, evolution and their history is related to the evolution and history of the continent of Africa (Cromwell, 1986). Bloch *et al.* (1998) argue that the term African women is often used to represent a powerless, poor and ignorant person whose life is massively different from that of fellow western women. Hollos (1998); Mbilinyi (1998); Okeke-Ihejirika (2004) argue that numerous literature on African women's multiple representations and identities illustrates that, African women have held positions of power and high status as chiefs, ritual leaders, spiritual leaders, family matriarchs and various other positions within

their communities for many years as a result, women are capable of holding positions that were traditionally described as male positions. Mbilinyi (1998); Okeke-Ihejirika (2004) argue that this does not portray the famous stereotype that is primarily associated with African women.

2.4   Conceptual Framework

There are several theories that talk about gender and race inequality. These theories include the social role theory, the person centred theory, the equity theory. However, this study is underpinned by the *social role theory*.

2.4.1   The social role theory

The social role theory states that individuals develop prescriptive and descriptive role expectations of others' behaviour premised on an evolutionary sex-based division of labour (Wood and Eagly, 2012). It further advocates that the detachment of labour has conventionally associated women with homemaker positions and men with breadwinner positions (Wood and Eagly, 2012). The theory further stipulates that men are considered more self-assured, agentic and independent than women, whereas women are characteristically perceived to be more relations-oriented, communal and nurturing than men (Schein, 2007). According to this theory, women are more likely to encounter disapproval than men, when it comes to occupying leadership and managerial positions (Eagly and Karau, 2002). Based on this theory, this study sought to establish the extent to which it applies to African women encounters as they aspire to occupy or are already occupying managerial positions at NRF.

According to Eagly, Wood and Diekman (2000), the social role theory bases its argument on the knowledge of social psychology. Therefore, the social role theory can be used to investigate how people allow their behaviour to be directed by the expectations that the society architected for them. "The theory emphasizes the historical sexual division of labour and gender hierarchy as the main reason why the sexes are implicitly seen as having different levels of status and different roles to occupy" (Eagly *et al.*, 2000:124). Eagly *et al.* (2000:151) also argue that the social role theory forecasts that women and men behave in different ways so that they conform to gender roles and stereotypes. Consequently, women and men behave stereotypically. Eagly *et al.* (2000) further argue that these dissimilarities would in turn support gender roles and stereotypes and channel men and women into different social roles.

Figure 2.2 exemplifies the social role theory which emphasised the roles of both men and women. The social role theory according to Eagly and Wood (1999) defines women as home makers and men as strong enough for role of a hunter.

2.4.2 Feminist and organisational Theory

A number of gender inequality theories that have developed over the past decades as well as the number of manuscripts inside feminist and organisational theory that precisely talk to qualified and managerial women's experience in the workplace and family life have developed (Farmer, 2010). Nonetheless, research conducted by Farmer (2010) indicted that the number of women occupying managerial positions is still limited. "Research on the interface of work and family for BME professional and managerial women working and living in the UK and Sub-Saharan Africa remains very limited, leaving many organisational and social research questions unanswered" (Farmer, 2010:9). Farmer (2013) argues that although there is a number of conflicting roles between balancing work obligations, family and community in feminist and mainstream analysis of women and employment, experiences of African women are hardly ever emphasized in feminists and organisational theory. Farmer (2013) argues that non-appearance remains in spite of an increase in number of African women occupying managerial and professional positions in the past three decades.

2.4.3 Person Centred Theory

Theories of person centred advocated that absence of socialisation practices and behavioural dissimilarities of men and women in leadership brought about glass ceiling (Riger and Galligan, 1980). Terjesen and Singh (2008) also argue that women were perceived as people who lack

essential abilities of a similar kind as self-confidence and determination when equated to their male counterparts. Furthermore, Terjesen and Singh (2008) highlighted that women lacked relevant leadership experience and education that qualifies one to be a leader.

2.4.4 The equity theory

The equity theory advocates for recognition, equality and recognition in the workplace. According to the equity theory, what stimulates people to work is the insight of equatability and in-equatability (Al-Zawahreh and Al-Madi, 2012). According to Al-Zawahreh and Al-Madi (2012), the equity theory put emphasis on two sides namely the inputs and the output. This means that if the employee feels that they are unfairly treated, they will react with the aim of correcting any sort of inequality they feel they are subjected to. Employees may do this by lowering productivity or by reducing the quality of the work they produce. Figure 2.3 below explains the equity theory by showing the examples work inputs that should lead to the outputs.
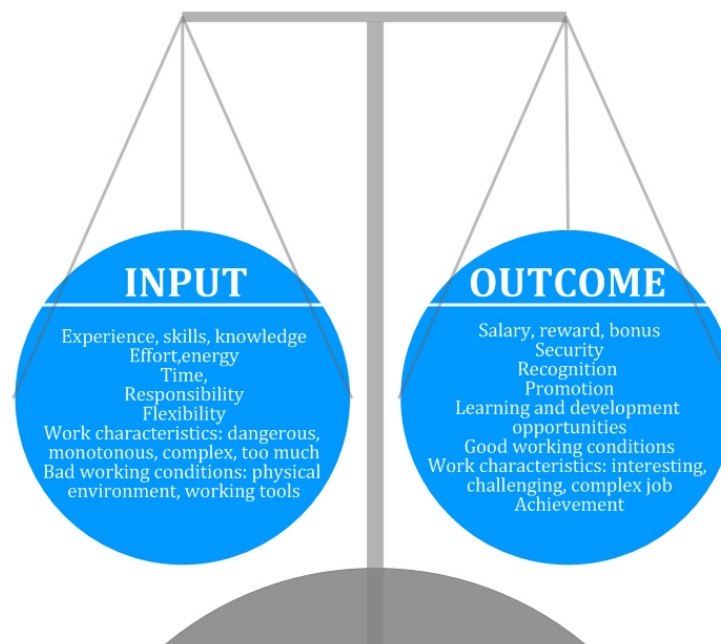
FIGURE 2.3: Examples for the Inputs and Outcomes in the Equity Theory (2011).
Source: Work Attitudes and Job Motivation Home - Kayla Weaver (FA16 002)

2.5   Statistics

The Statistics South Africa (2016) indicated that females constitute 51% of the population in SA while males constitute 49%, nevertheless, study which was conducted by South Africa Department of Labour (2016-2017) revealed that women only represent 44.8% of total people employed. The South Africa Department of Labour (2016-2017) argued women are underrepresented in the workplace. Data collected by the Federal Glass Ceiling Commission. (1995), cited in Rice (2010) highlighted inequalities in the pay scale, the shortage of African women in senior management positions and uneven number of African women linked to jobs with no career path. "Although women represent more than 50% of the world population, there is no country in which women represent half, or even close to half, of the corporate managers" (Adler and Izraeli, 1994:89). Research also indicated that women currently hold 12% and men 88% of all top management positions in South Africa. In senior management, women hold 18% and men 82% of the positions (South Africa Department of Labour, 2016-2017). "Prior research on gender and leadership has shown that women are underrepresented in top leadership positions and often face biases when they do occupy these roles" (Carli and Eagly, 2007:20).

2.6   Comparison of African and White women

To further explain and understand the challenges that African women experience in managerial position, it would have been worthy to compare the experiences of an African woman to that of a white woman. However, the available data on White women is inadequate. "We do not have complete data for White women" (Farmer, 2010:59). Nkomo (1988) also expressed concerns about inadequate literature on African women managers on her chapter titled "race and sex" where she states "every time I come across a book or article on women in management, I would hurriedly scan the book hoping to find some mention of the unique experience of Black women managers. More often than not I found nothing. . . ." (Nkomo, 1988:60). According to Nkomo (1988), cited in Farmer (2010), this is because of the insinuation that the same-role restrictions operating as limitations for white managers influence the experience of African women managers also. "To understand the experience of Black female managers one merely extrapolates findings from the women management research to Black female managers" (Nkomo, 1988:33). Nkomo (2001) studied the experiences of both white women and Black women in management and discovered that the journey experiences to corporate doors of both White

women and Black women is similar. However, Nkomo (2001) research indicates that African women and White women travel separate pathways and make different choices about how to persist in their professional occupations. According to Nkomo (2001), African women had to struggle with both racism and sexism.

Sanchez-Hucles and Davis (2010) analysed pay and gender equality and discovered that when pay is analysed in terms of gender (Men versus Women) or race (African versus White) the unique experience of an African women is impossible to detect. Sanchez-Hucles and Davis (2010) argue that the higher pay of white women covers the lower pay of African women relative to white women and the lower pay of Africans covers the lower pay of African women relative to African men despite African women's greater qualifications. Sanchez-Hucles and Davis (2010) further argues that the experiences of African women is more complicated than of a white women. The reason for this extra difficulty is the manner in which sexism has been highlighted without taking into consideration other forms of discrimination. Suyemoto and Ballou (2007), cited in Sanchez-Hucles and Davis (2010:172) argues that white women who share the same colour with the majority of managers "can more easily focus exclusively on gender discrimination and may overlook the influence of race and ethnicity on perceptions of leadership" while "Women of color can also face 'gendered racism' when they are unable to separate the individual effects of each aspect of their identities."

2.7   Race, Gender, Ethnicity and Class discrimination in the workplace

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, theories of gender have argued that the situation of an African women cannot be easily explained by the category race alone. "The concept of intersectionality illustrates that one cannot adequately study race and ethnicity without studying gender" (DeFrancisco and Palczewski, 2007:14), cited in Farmer (2010). According to Farmer (2013), South African historical policies and socio-cultural norms were created in such a way that they favour men and defined women as inferior to men. As a result, women were only assigned to positions of minors. "Historically race has functioned as one of the most powerful and yet delicate markers of human characteristics. Similarly skin colour – signifier of cultural and racial difference – has also become the privilege marker of races" (Loomba, 1998:121). Farmer (2010) introduced the idiom think manager – think male' which was coined by an American academic

named Victoria Schein in 1973 which did not only concentrate on representation of women in management but also captured a developing belief among researchers that desired appearances associated with management had to be the same as those related with men. "The application of historically and culturally specific meanings to the totality of human physiological variation 'races' are socially imagined rather than biological realities" (Miles, 1989:71).

Farmer (2010) argues that even though people are separated in terms of geographical locations, they still have shared values, i.e. shared language, shared cultural history and way of life, defined their common ethnicity. "Ethnicities are re-invented in each generation and reinforced by a variety of socio-cultural practices in the interest of nationalism, particularly as more people immigrate to where they are forced to 'reconsider' their ethnic identity in their attempts to assimilate more easily in their new country" (Sollers, 1989:42). According to Bell and Nkomo (2001), in order for women to fit in in their managerial positions, they are expected to adopt masculine personality traits as opposed to maintaining their feminine qualities for them to be accepted in the corporate environment. "Race and ethnicity incorporate multiple social realities which are often reflected through gender and class differences. Intersections between races are frequently ignored which can be problematic for some" Acker (2016:442), cited in Farmer (2010). "As with race and ethnicity, gender is also a category that is socially constructed to maintain social hierarchy" (Browne and Misra,2003:489), cited in (Farmer, 2010:44).

2.8 African women in managerial positions

Research done by Farmer (2010) indicated an increase in a number of women entering management and professional jobs globally in the past three decades. Nevertheless, Farmer (2010) also discussed that only a small percentage of manuscripts within feminist and organisational theory precisely address the lives and experiences of professional and African women within the workplace and family life. Farmer (2010) further argues that its either not enough attention is given to the likelihood that a number of people may experience additional or dissimilar barriers and constraints within the workplace. "While there is an extensive and growing conflict between balancing family, community and work obligations in feminist and mainstream analysis of women and employment, the experiences of Black women are rarely highlighted in feminist and organisational theory" (Farmer, 2010:59). Davidson and Burke (1994) argue that women managers are expected to work harder than their man counterparts in order to prove that are capable of managing. "Women managers have to make a conscious effort to be taken seriously"

(Davidson and Burke, 1994:36). Spierenburg and Wels (2006) conducted interviews where being a female was labelled as a crucial aspect of an individual individuality which has a profound influence on management practice and experience.

Ryan, Haslam and Postmes (2007) identified additional barrier which they refer to as the "Glass Cliff". The Glass Cliff is explained as a situation whereby women are underrepresented in leadership and management positions or the roles that they are associated with are high risk and have an increased chance of failure. Ryan and Haslam (2007) conducted a research and discovered that once women have entered through the glass ceiling, they are more likely to confront a Glass Cliff or a condition where their leadership positions are more unwarranted than those of their male counterparts. As a result, these women are associated with greater risk of failure and criticism because they are more likely to be involved in management of organisational units that are in crisis (Ryan *et al.*, 2007). In summary, these walls keep professional and managerial women in traditional feminised sectors. (Farmer, 2010:73) argues "that there are some instances where women enter through the Glass Ceiling, scale the Glass Cliff and crash the Concrete Wall to rise to high level senior management and leadership positions." When women finally get these positions, Rostollan and Levene (2006) argue that, some women encounter a "Glass Wall" which refers to the reality outside the imposing ceiling. "The disillusioning discovery that breaking through the Glass Ceiling neither affords nor guarantees women access to professional equality and acceptance. Instead, after brushing away the shards of the broken Glass Ceiling, executive women metaphorically crash into a new obstacle – a Glass Wall" (Rostollan and Levene, 2006:2) cited in (Farmer, 2010).

Sanchez-Hucles and Davis (2010) argue that even when African women enter into management, the barriers do not disappear. Haslam and Ryan (2008), cited in Sanchez-Hucles and Davis (2010) scrutinized the different types of positions that are given to African women when they enter into management and observed that African women are likely to find themselves dealing with conditions that are high risk and that can possibly set them for catastrophe, as a result, they are placed on what is discussed as glass cliff. Hewlett, Luce, Servon, Sherbin, Shiller, Sosnovich and Sumberg (2008) observed that a number of organisations employ women to the board after the organisation experiences poor performance. Women are then blamed for the failure of the organisation which happened before they joined the board. Hewlett *et al.* (2008) added that men also fail when placed in challenging situations but women are easily blamed when they fail in these challenging situations.

2.9 Barriers to entry – Why are there still so few African women in management?

Although the new South African democratic government created conditions that favour African women career advancement, eliminating barriers for them to enter into management is the single most challenging task for both government and human resource managers (Farmer, 2010). "Many women face internal and external barriers leaving a disproportionate number of women concentrated in lower levels of management" (Farmer, 2010:58). Mello and Phago (2007) argue that legislation introduced by SA government after 1994 is an important instrument that is meant to address unfair discrimination and obstacles in the workplace, however, some barriers that exist may be subtle and could undermine all the efforts put into making sure that African women are afforded equal opportunities. "The issue of tokenism is a great challenge for black women entering management" (Spierenburg and Wels, 2006:87). Hymowitz and Schellhardt (1986) suggests psychological or internalised discrimination as one the barriers. This is a results of historical discrimination against women and black people. The idea that women are not meant to occupy management jobs and the belief that men prefer the high stakes environment of top management while women prefer positions that have greater job security and fewer challenges. "The maternal instinct will trump women's career motivation" (Hymowitz and Schellhardt, 1986:5).

According to Kanter (1977); Wolf and Fligstein (1979) discrimination is still the major barrier that prevent women from climbing the ladder to management positions. "The sexual division of labour in the workplace maintains that the generalization '*men control, women obey*' continues to hold" (Bradley, 1989:1). Bradley (1989) also argues that the increase of the number of women in managerial position does not always mean that women are accepted as managers but the policies introduced to ensure diversity in a workplace have an impact on hiring. Bradley (1989) further argues that a number of researchers in management are reasonably doubtful when presented with census data presenting the extraordinary number of women entering into management, one wonders whether these women are really managers in anything other than title. Catalyst on Davidson and Burke (2011) addressed the question of 'why are there still few women in management?' separately. In 2002, catalyst conducted a survey on 20 European countries and the USA, and found that gender stereotype and preconceptions of women's role ranked as the highest barrier to women's progression (Catalyst, 2002), cited in Davidson and Burke (2011).

In 2007, the catalyst discovered that gender biases and stereotypes existed predominantly in succession preparation process.

2.9.1 Glass ceiling

Bolat, Bolat, and Kihc (2011) argue that glass ceiling plays a big role in preventing African women from moving in their career. "One of the most commonly cited obstacles that women of all racial and ethnic groups experience is the glass ceiling, a transparent barrier that keeps them from moving into the executive suite despite stellar qualifications and professional accomplishments" (Clark, Kristensen and Westergård-Nielsen, 2009:12). According to Bell and Nkomo (2001), glass ceiling exists for both African women and White women but the difference is that White women can see through the glass ceiling and they can easily advance their careers, while African women face prejudice barriers, gender difficulties and defeat cultural confusions. Broadbridge (2006) argues that glass ceiling is not the reason why African women are prevented from entering into management or from occupying managerial positions. A study done by Hoobler, Wayne and Lemmon (2009), cited in Ramazan (2010) indicated that women managers deal with family conflicts more than women employees.

Hoobler *et al.* (2009) describes women as 'nurturing by nature' and as people who struggle to take care of family and be a manager at the same time, as a result are less fit able for occupying or holding managerial positions. Hymowitz and Schellhardt (1986) defines glass ceiling as barriers that are not seen that exists for previously disadvantaged people that are there to minimise their flexibility in organisations. According to Hymowitz and Schellhardt (1986), glass ceiling focuses on discrimination due to many variables for example the stereotypes of an ideal manager or of how women tend to behave in a work place which clashes with male management archetypes, as a result, women are judged as unsuitable for management positions. Cotter, Hermsen, Ovadia and Vanneman (2001) define glass ceiling as an artificial barrier to development for people belonging to designated groups. Furthermore, these barriers reflect unfair discrimination between those who are advantaged and those who are disadvantaged. "The limited progress of minority female executives has also been attributed to a 'glass ceiling', an invisible barrier to advancement based on attitudinal or organisational biases" (Meyerson and Fletcher, 1999:130).

Glass ceiling does not mean that managerial positions are not visible to women. Positions are visible but not yet attainable. The glass ceiling is also very noticeable to those whose careers have been affected by it (Auster, 1993). Basically, these are the barriers that prevent the previously

disadvantaged to climb a corporate ladder even if they possess enough skills and education to occupy or enter into management. Federal Glass Ceiling Commission. (1995) explains that glass ceiling inequality does not only represents gender inequality but racial discrimination as well. Auster (1993) argue that glass ceiling is seen most intensely in the statistics on the percentage of women in senior management positions in big companies. Auster (1993) explains that glass ceiling is not one ceiling or barrier that prevents African women from entering into management but rather many different and persistent forms of gender prejudice that arise regularly in both overt and covert ways. "The barriers that prevent women from ascending to senior management positions in large corporations have often been described by the metaphor 'the glass ceiling', a transparent barrier which prevents women from moving up the corporate ladder past a certain point" (Morrison, White and Van Velsor, 1987), cited in Oakley (2000,321).

2.9.2 Think manager-think white male

Transformation from the apartheid government to democratic government was not easy (Booysen, 2005). South Africa achieved democracy after a number of negotiations prior 1994. According to the Department of Women (2015), central to this democracy was a commitment to equality including empowering women and racial equality. Over the years, South African government has taken a huge steps towards racial inequality and gender inequality. "South African Government has put considerable emphasis on promoting gender equality" (Nkomo, 2005:9). According to research done by Morrison and von Glinow (1990), African woman managers are currently experiencing increased organisational success which often comes with a price because of their perceptions of racism, sexism and biasness regarding class, as a result, women tend to feel devalued as employees and invalidated. "One problem is that people do not think 'female' when they think leader consequently, women are not viewed as a good 'fit' for leadership positions. This is due, in part, to the fact that gender stereotypes contradict leader stereotypes" (Schein, 1973), cited in Brenner, Tomkiewicz and Schein (1989; 662).

Donaldson (1997) argues that the continued attitude towards women based on gender stereotype is by far the major barrier preventing women from occupying managerial positions within organisations. In the past, powers were not equally distributed to men and women. Men were superior to women, hence, the opportunities that were allocated to them were not the same. Donaldson (1997) further argues that there is a belief that the characteristics required for success as a manager are likely to be held by men. This stereotype contribute a lot to the shortage

of African women in managerial positions. "The see manager see male stereotype channels women and minorities into less complex jobs, as well as underpaying female dominated and significantly minority jobs relative to their compensable characteristics" (Harlan and Berheide, 1994:4). Spierenburg and Wels (2006) argue that characteristics of a manager are similar to that of men not women. "The stereotypic image of leader was found to be equal to that of male. Even though theory argues that the most effective leader should be androgynously. Women; therefore ought to have equal chance at senior management positions" (Schmidt and Moller 2010; 18). During an interview conducted by Spierenburg and Wels (2006) one African women stated that being a women in management means you have to work hard to prove yourself and entire 24-hour day to show people that you deserve to be a manager. "It is hard work to overcome prejudices that come with Affirmative Action appointments. The notion that your sex and skin colour is the reason for your appointment is experienced as very dis-empowering." (Interviews July, 2000) cited in (Spierenburg and Wels, 2006:87).

2.9.3 Lack of commitment to advance African women

One of the barriers that prevent women from occupying managerial position is unwillingness of the organisation to promote diversity in its management (Bell and Nkomo, 2001). According to research conducted by Powell (1999) over a decade ago, men continue to be dominant in senior management and it is difficult to eliminate prejudice and discrimination in the workplace. "Men are likely to be more comfortable with other men – *the old boy network*" (Bell and Nkomo, 2001:3). Promoting and hiring decisions are frequently unstructured and open to bias (Bell and Nkomo, 2001). According to Spierenburg and Wels (2006), the Non-Government organisation Sectors were meant to provide a good opportunity for black women but black women continued to be a minority in management positions. Spierenburg and Wels (2006) argue that this is mainly because of the shortage of qualified and experienced black women in business and government, consequently, diversifying management becomes difficult. "Once women have attained management positions, many discover that the organisation commitment to their success stops there" (Spierenburg and Wels, 2006: 93). Spierenburg and Wels (2006) also argue that new women managers do not have access to company information, they do not own the terrain and they do not have the same power and support systems as their male counterparts. "I have a feeling that the organisation wasn't really committed to having black women successful, it was like running into a brick wall" (Interview June, 2000) conducted by (Spierenburg and Wels, 2006: 94).

2.9.4 Age limits, inadequate skills and education

The SA apartheid government introduced the policy of apartheid, which promoted racial segregation and favoured white supremacy (Davis and Maldonado, 2015). Societies also introduced the patriarchal system which subordinated women and made men superior. While women were not encouraged to go to school, African people in general were not allowed the same quality education as white people (Davis and Maldonado, 2015). The new SA democratic government consistently opposed racial oppression and gender discrimination. As a result, the government introduced new laws which were aimed at correcting the inequalities of the past. Because African women did not receive equal education as that of men and white women, it is difficult for them to qualify for management positions (Carli and Eagly, 2001). They also do not possess the skills needed to occupy managerial positions (Carli and Eagly, 2001). Davis and Maldonado (2015) also argue that among the factors that promote barriers for African women to occupy managerial positions is the 'pipeline problem' which implies that women with the appropriate educational background are not available, therefore, they are not hired.

2.9.5 Unfair selection and promotion procedure

Research conducted by Govender (2005), indicated that in SA, females constitute the majority of the population at 53% and males at only 47%. The Study which was conducted in 2002 Commission Employment Equity revealed that women only represent 35% of total people employed. According to South Africa Department of Labour (2016-2017), women are underrepresented in the workplace. The study also indicated that women hold 12% and men 88% of all top management positions in South Africa. In senior management, women hold 18% and men 82% of the positions (South Africa Department of Labour, 2016-2017). Govender (2005) also studied other factors that prevent African women from occupying managerial positions in organisations. "There are many barriers that impede women from moving up the corporate ladder" (Govender, 2005). These factors include;

- Women do not supporting other women

- Family commitments

- Lack of training and skills

- Gender stereotyping

Figure 2.4 below shows that Top management roles still go to white men in South Africa
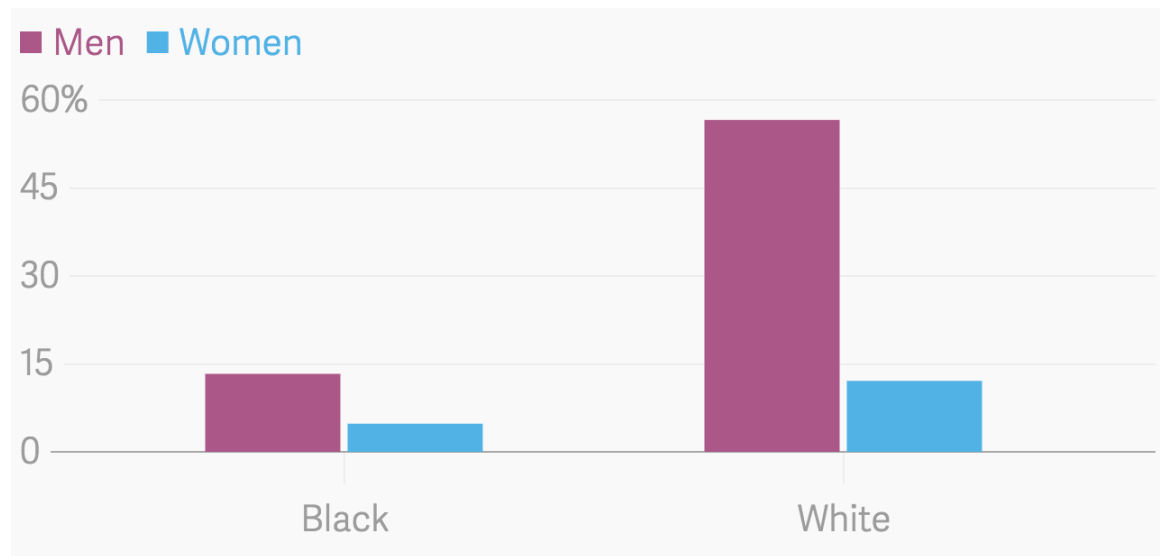
FIGURE 2.4: Employment Equity Report, South Africa 2014-2015
Source: Tshabalala (2015)

2.9.6 Lack of support from other managers

Mello and Phago (2007) argue that lack of support from other African women managers and managers in general may lead to discouragement. Garvey, Stokes and Megginson (2014) cited in Cain (2015) emphasised a number of purposes of a mentor to include the development of managers' change of positions in the workplace; to promote people to senior positions, support change and improve performance. The inadequate amount of woman role models and mentors and the elimination of women from informal networks serve as obstacles to the advancement of women in reaching managerial positions (Mello and Phago, 2007). Lack of support from both male and female, white and black managers may result to a drop of number of women wanting to occupy managerial positions in an organisation (Cain, 2015). "Mentors could be used to encourage ethnic minority and disadvantaged groups as well as support women to break through the glass ceiling" (Garvey *et al.*, 2014) cited in (Cain, 2015:29).

Cain (2015) further argues that mentoring can also assist new women managers with regards to advancing their careers. "Mentoring is a resource that can be beneficial to the success of someone building his or her career" (Garvey *et al.*, 2014) cited on (Cain, 2015:29). Linstead *et al.* (2004) argue that most female managers do not have role models, instead they have male

mentors and that women managers receive lower pays as compared to that of man. Because of the negative stereotype surrounding women and the impact of racial discrimination, African women have few role models. This is a challenge because they are not encouraged even when they face difficulties in their roles. They are isolated and are hardly included in the decision making processes. African women have few people to look up to, as a result, they tend to face difficulties in their managerial positions (Cain, 2015).

African women lack support and empowerment from other managers, and they are not motivated to do the managerial work. "Mentors have been identified as higher ranking, influential, senior organisational members with advanced experience and knowledge who are committed to providing upward mobility and support to a protégé's professional career "(Ragins, 1989:4). According to Hunt and Michael (1983), cited on Ragins (1989) the mentoring relationships play a vital role in an organisation, firstly, mentors offer preparation and inside information about the organisation and its politics. Secondly, mentors may offer psychosocial support and boosts protégé' poise by serving as a friend, role model and coach. Thirdly, mentors may also provide special access to useful information of contacts and resources.

2.9.7 Conflicting roles

According to Mello and Phago (2007), South African history defined women as people whose place is in the kitchen and African people as those who can only do certain jobs. Even though the SA democratic government introduced legislations that favours women and all the people that were disadvantaged in the past, but the stereotypes still exists (Mello and Phago, 2007). "Women sometimes encounter difficulties in combining family and work responsibilities. These difficulties discourage them from taking on the fast pace and demanding schedule of a career. Women have to make difficult choices" (Mello and Phago, 2007:150). Even when African women managers are in managerial position, their contributions to decision making are not respected as that of men because it is believed that they do not possess enough managerial skills needed Carli and Eagly (2007). "There is a gender bias that exists such that men are associated with being leaders because they more commonly demonstrate assertive masculine traits that connote leadership, such as dominance, whereas women are less apt to be perceived as discrimination becomes even more complex" Carli and Eagly (2007:4).

Spaights and Whitaker (1995) argue that African women are forced into the multiple roles of being a provider, homemaker, protector, disciplinarian, and mother. Ramazan (2010) argues that

work and family conflict is among the most common negative impacts that prevent women from reaching higher management level. Hakim (2000), cited in Farmer (2010) argues that even when women are highly educated their basic pattern of sex-role does not change. Hakim (2000) further argues that a few women would choose to be career-oriented and to be committed at work while others would prefer to be home-centred and family oriented. Most of women however would want to combine and balance work and family lives.

2.9.8 Leadership Style: A barrier to Women?

Cann and Siegfried (1990) argue that leadership styles between male and female are without no doubt stereotyped. "Male characteristics and values constitute the 'initiating structure' leadership style and female characteristics and value constitute the 'consideration' leadership style" (Cann and Siegfried, 1990:415). According to Rosener (1990), there are visible differences between management and gender. Rosener (1990) argues that men tend to use transactional leadership style while women use a transformational leadership style. Downey, Papageorgiou and Stough (2006), cited in Ramazan (2010) contends that managers excising transformation leadership accomplish a higher level on emotional communication which is more ordinary in the middle of females managers. According to Rosener (1990), the transformational leadership style promotes motivation between subordinates, subsequently, this has a positive impact on group commitment and motivates the subordinates to reach organisational vision and goals. "Transformational leadership style has been defined by several authors as visionary leadership" (Rosener, 1990:119).

2.10 Challenges faced by African women in management

The barriers that prevents African women from occupying managerial positions plays a big role in preventing women from being offered managerial positions, this is referred to as glass ceiling. Research on women managers by Mupambirei (2013) shows that women that who are already in managerial positions continue to face a number of challenges in the workplace. This may be because of the gender and racial stereotype; the way women are perceived in terms of their gender characteristics and the gender roles they play. Bussey and Bandura (1999), cited in Mupambirei (2013) defines gender as differences between men and women in terms of their roles and responsibilities which are learned and influenced by various societies and cultures (Bussey and Bandura, 1999). Gender roles are societal norms that define the characteristics of a women

and that of a man. "Gender roles are consensual beliefs about the attributes of women and men" (Eagly and Karau, 2002:574), this means that women and men are expected to behave in a certain manner.

The diagram below summarises some of the challenges experienced by women in management. These reasons includes the fact that women held higher standards than men, the unwillingness of the organisation to promote women into management positions, the family responsibilities, not having enough networks, women are not brave enough to ask for promotions.
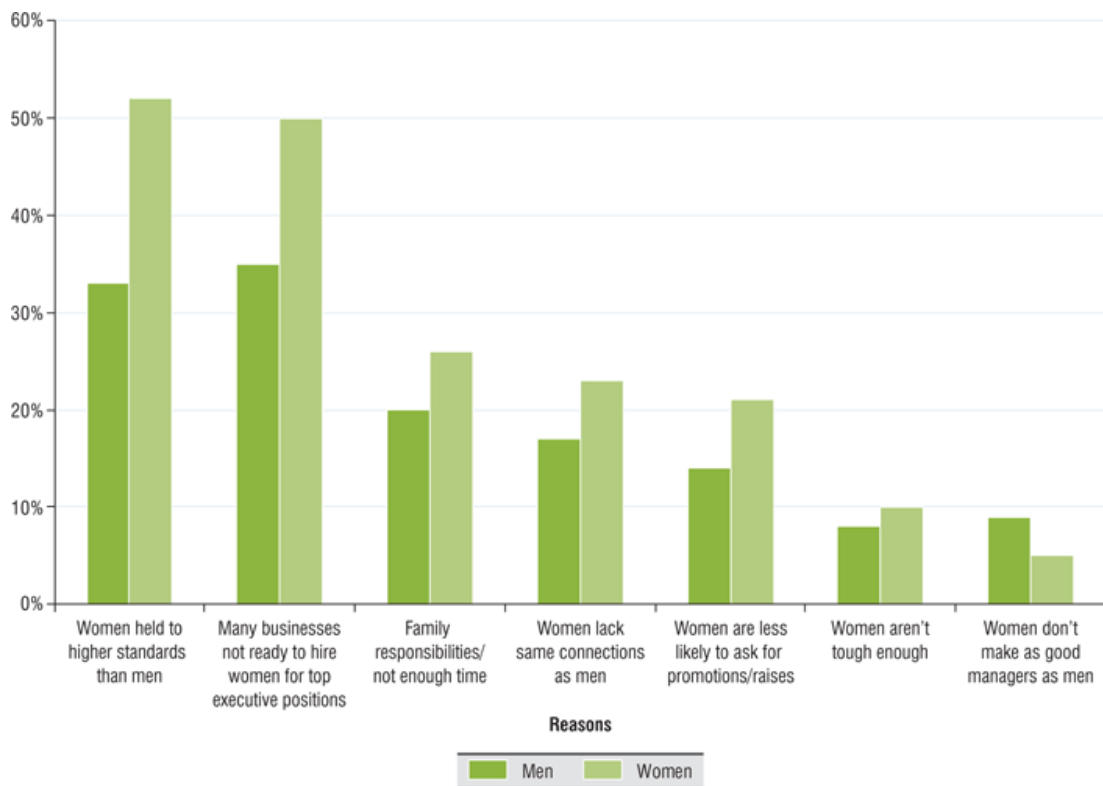
FIGURE 2.5: Reasons for shortage of women in management.
Source: "Why Aren't More Women in Top Business Positions?" PRC, Jan. 13, 2015.

2.10.1 Unrecognition and discrimination

Because of the perceptions about women and the South African apartheid history, African women are still not fairly recognised for managerial positions. Glazer-Raymo (2001:145) argues that even when women study and earn professional degrees for entry into traditionally male professions, women experience isolation, exclusion from informal networks, and systemic discrimination. "The report notes that 26% of black women feel their talents are not recognized by their superiors,

compared to 17% of white women" (Miley, 2015). Their contributions and achievements go unnoticed. According to Holvino and Blake-Beard (2004), African women managers do not receive the same pay as white women, or male managers in general. "African women receive lower pay than white men and women as well as men of colour, and they must learn to maintain a positive self-image when confronted with 'micro aggressions' that could halt promotions, mentoring, and success" (Holvino and Blake-Beard, 2004:176).

2.10.2 Isolation

Schein (2007) argues that because of the stereotype that women do not possess managerial characteristics, they tend to be disrespected and isolated at work. In addition, their perceptions and suggestions sometimes go unnoticed. According to the manager-as-male stereotype, gender stereotyping of the ideal manager fosters biasness against women in managerial selection, placement, promotion, and training decisions (Schein, 2007). " Women, and especially women of colour, are typically more isolated, without mentors or a network of support, and are less able to garner the help that they might need when facing extraordinary challenges" (Haslam and Ryan, 2008) cited in (Sanchez-Hucles and Davis, 2010:175).

2.10.3 Work-life balance

Sundaresan (2014) argues that women have the role of two jobs which is the one at the office and the one at home. According to research done by Madsen (2012), women are interested in advancing their careers and they also desire to achieve a work-life balance outside their career. Guillaume and Pochic (2009) argue that women find it challenging to balance between work and family, for this reason, they require assistance from their husbands. While Guillaume and Pochic (2009) were discussing the work-life balance they presented the question directed to women 'what would you sacrifice to ascent to a top management position?' To answer this question, women argued that paid and unpaid jobs needed evaluation regarding the discussion of the barriers faced when seeking management positions (Guillaume and Pochic, 2009). Sundaresan (2014) also presented research which discussed the factors affecting work-life balance for women across various businesses. The results revealed that a number of women experience difficulty in balancing family and work. Sundaresan (2014), cited in Cain (2015) argue that as a result of poor work life balance, women experience great levels of anxiety and stress, dysfunction at home and they end up not being able to fulfill their full potential.

2.10.4 Women in management are expected to constantly prove themselves

Williams (2015), after his interviews with women in management positions uncovered several other challenges they face in their positions. According to Williams (2015) women's mistakes are noticed and are remembered longer. They are often penalised for making errors while their male counterparts are praised for taking risks. Secondly, Williams (2015) argues that women's successes are associated with having luck. When a woman finally breaks the glass ceiling it viewed as pure luck while men's promotion or success is based on their skills. When a woman achieves more than men, the woman is likely to receive a superstar evaluation. Compared to a man who's a slightly better performer, she receives much lower evaluations. Lastly, Williams (2015) argues that women frequently offer an idea, and the idea becomes overlooked but when a man states the same idea later, he is likely to receive acknowledgement and admiration.

2.10.5 Age discrimination

According to Buengeler, Homan and Voelpel (2016), the 21st century companies are now hiring young managers with the aim of promoting diversity in the work place and to give opportunity to the groups that were discriminated for these positions in the past, however, to some organisations this is a challenge. According to Buengeler *et al.* (2016), young managers often face unique challenges, among these challenges is being accepted as leaders or managers by their employees. Buengeler *et al.* (2016) and other researchers analysed the difficulties of young managers by doing experimental research and a field study among 83 teams involving 690 individuals and 83 leaders. The manager ages ranged from 23 years to 48 years. After this research, the Universiteit van Amsterdam UVA found that younger managers face a sharp risk of being rejected on account of their perceived lack of expertise and status. This rejection turn to be visible in subordinates opting to resign, which has damaging implications for the organisation at large. Zenger and Folkman (2015) also argue that young managers are not fully trusted as a result their ideas and opinions are not often recognised. They are observed as less experienced managers and their judgment is more frequently questioned. Because young managers do not possess many years of experience, their lack of experience leads others to question their technical expertise and professional (Zenger and Folkman, 2015). Lastly, other managers struggle to see younger managers as their role models. According to Zenger and Folkman (2015) younger managers have often a difficulty with proving their worth.

2.11 Policies and legislation in advancing African women in management

To ensure smooth transition from unfair discrimination to equity in an organisation, the SA government introduced policies and legislations with the aim of correcting the imbalances of the past. Mello and Phago (2007) discussed the policies that were introduced to correct inequalities; the Employment Equity Act, the South African constitution, the affirmative action and other policy documents that were introduced to ensure equality in the workplace.

2.11.1 Employment Equity Act (EEA)

Since the first democratic elections in South Africa, there has been an accelerated move to address gender imbalances at managerial and executive levels in organisations through the Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998 (Mello and Phago, 2007). "The EEA Act promotes equality, prevents unfair discrimination and prohibits "hate speech". In its preamble, the Act emphasizes the need to eradicate the inequalities in South African society, particularly those that were generated by colonialism, apartheid and patriarchy. Among other things, the Act prohibits unfair discrimination on the basis of sex and race" (Suraj-Narayan, 2005:83). The Employment Equity Act was introduced to eliminate all forms of discrimination in the workplace, to ensure that equal opportunities are afforded by each and every employee in an organisation. The purpose of The Employment Equity Act, 1998 (Act 55 of 1998) is to further the aspirations of the 1996 Constitution in promoting equity (Mello and Phago, 2007). According to South African Department of Labour (2015), the EEA applies to all employers and workers and protects workers and job seekers from unfair discrimination, and also provides a framework for implementing affirmative action. According to (The South African Institute of Chartered Accountants, 2016), the EEA aimed at achieving equity in the workplace by promoting equal opportunities and non-discriminatory treatment in employment through removal of unfair discrimination and applying Affirmative Action measures to redress the difficulties in employment experienced by the previously disadvantaged, in order to ensure equitable representation in all occupational categories in the workforce.

2.11.2   Affirmative Action policy

Affirmative action is a policy that was introduced to ensure that suitable and qualified people from designated groups have equal opportunities at work. The main objective of AA was to improve abilities of historically disadvantaged people through development in the organisation/workplace and introduction of programmes that will help them develop. The KwaZulu Natal Department of education and culture defines someone who is suitably qualified as someone who possesses the following skills;

- Prior learning and experience

- Formal and relevant qualifications

- Trainability of the applicant

- The ability to do the job

According to Morrison (1992), policies such as Affirmative Action were designed on top of other things to promote the previously disadvantaged to senior management positions, however, this has not been successful yet. Morrison *et al.* (1987) argue that women stand little chance of competing with men. Research conducted by Catalyst in 1990 showed that companies were still not creating diversity initiatives. Instead, a mere four percent of the companies that Catalyst (1990) interviewed made an effort to promote women into line positions, arguing that not enough was being done by organisations to promote women into more senior ranks.

2.11.3   The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996

The South African Constitution was also introduced to make sure that the policies and legislation are adhered to. "The supremacy of the 1996 Constitution means that its provisions relating to the advancement of women and other designated groups cannot be ignored" (Republic of South Africa, 1998: 10)) and any organisation that fails to adhere with the constitution may be declared unconstitutional. Any action of a state department that overlook the SA constitution of 1996 may be confirmed unconstitutional and therefore null and void (Republic of South Africa, 1998). The SA constitution clearly dismiss all sort of discrimination caused by the differences or the characteristics of each individuals.

2.12 Summary of the chapter

This chapter looked at literature surrounding the reasons why there is a sluggish growth of African women entering into management. This was done by identifying and discussing the barriers that prevent African women from attaining these positions and the challenges they face once they occupy these positions. To eliminate these imbalances of the past, the SA government introduced new laws that favoured designated groups. This chapter introduced the topic and introduced different literature surrounding the topic.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Research methodology refers to a way of finding out the outcome of a given problem on a specific matter or rather a problem that is also known as a research problem. Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2005) define research as the process that involves obtaining scientific knowledge by means of assorted objective methods and procedures. In methodology, a researcher uses different criteria for researching the given research problem. According to Redman and Mory (2009), research is defined as organised effort to gain new knowledge. Methodology refers to the way of searching or solving the research problem (Industrial Research Institute, 2010). In research methodology, a researcher always attempts to investigate the given question methodically in their own way and find out all the answers until conclusion. If research does not work methodically on a problem, there would be less possibility to find out the final result (Industrial Research Institute, 2010). An outstanding research methodology achieves the purpose and objective(s) of a research (Blanche, Blanche, Durrheim and Painter, 2006:34). In this chapter the focus is on research design, methods of collecting data, as well as sampling techniques. The method that was used to collect data is also discussed and the different strategies that were be used in order to enhance the reliability and validity of the study.

3.2 Research paradigm

Terre-Blanche and Durrheim (1999) define research paradigm as a all-encompassing system of interconnected practice and rational that describe the nature of the study. "A paradigm is best described as a whole system of thinking" (Neuman, 2011:94). Notably, a paradigm would comprise of the recognised theories, traditions, models, frame of reference, methods, body of research and methodologies; and it could be seen as a model or framework for observation and understanding (Creswell, 2007; Babbie, 2010; Rubin and Babbie, 2010). "A paradigm refers to the established research traditions in a particular discipline" (Mouton, 1996:203). Babbie (2011:32) argues that a "paradigm would include the accepted theories, traditions, approaches, models, frame of reference, body of research and methodologies; and it could be seen as a model or framework for observation and understanding." Consequently, in this section the following paradigms will be discussed; post-positivism, transformative, constructivism and pragmatism. Table 3.1 below summarises these research paradigms.

3.2.1 Constructivism

The constructivist paradigm was introduced by the philosophy of Edmund Husserl's phenomenology (the methodology that put emphasis on the study of realisation and the substances of direct experience) and Wilhelm Dilthey's and other German philosophers' study of interpretive understanding called hermeneutics (Mertens, 2005), cited on (Eichelberger, 1989). According to Creswell (2003), the constructivist researcher lean towards the respondent's perspectives on the situation being investigated. Additionally, the constructivist researchers often depend on qualitative data collection methods and examinations of a combination of both quantitative and qualitative methods (Creswell, 2003). Nevertheless, constructivists seldom begin with a theory, however they come up with a theory or design of meanings as the study unfolds (Creswell, 2003). The techniques of gathering data in this paradigm involves mainly interviews, observation, diaries, pictures and documents (Chilisa, 2011). Because of these facts, this paradigm was suitable for this study because the study is testing the existing theory rather than seeking to develop its own theory. This study also aims at understanding and explaining human nature using qualitative method.

Interpretivist/Constructivist	Transformative	Pragmatic
Naturalistic	Critical theory	Consequences of actions
Phenomenological	Neo-Marxist Feminist	Problem-centred
Hermeneutic	Critical Race Theory	Pluralistic
Interpretivist	Freirean Partipatory	Real-world practice- oriented
Ethnographic	Emancipatory Advocay	Mixed models
Multiple participant meanings	Grand Narrative	
Social and historical construction	Empowerment issue -oriented	
Theory generation	Change-oriented	
Symbolic interaction	Interventionist Queer theory Race specific political	

TABLE 3.1: Research Paradigms.
Source: Mackenzie and Knipe (2006)

3.2.2 Post-positivism

Wildemuth (1993) explains that post-positivist research approach uses methodological pluralism. This is constructed on the basis that the technique to be applied in a particular study should be nominated based on the research question that is being addressed. Ryan (2006) also argues that the in post-positivist, a researcher pays more attention on understanding the study as it evolves during the investigation or exploration. In summary, post-positivism addresses three main questions relating to (1) the quality of the data (input) data; (2) the use of a more integrated approach; and (3) the context of the studied phenomenon (Wildemuth and Perryman, 2009). Wildemuth and Perryman (2009) explains that post- positivism allows the researcher to gain more subjective procedures for gathering data. Because of the above mentioned reasons, this approach was not suitable for this study.

3.2.3 Transformative

According to Mertens (2007), transformative paradigm depends on mixed methods approaches to talk to the research problem of the study. Creswell (2003) also argues that transformative researchers perceived the constructivist approach as inadequate when it comes to addressing the issue of social justice and side-lined people. According to transformative researchers, the investigation needs to be entwined with politics so that it transforms the lives of research participants, the institutions where the individuals work, and the researchers' lives (Creswell, 2003). Nonetheless, the transformative approach depends on mixed method approach for the expansion of more complete and full representations of social world through the use of manifold viewpoints and lenses. The explanations above excludes transformative approach paradigm for this study because the researcher only used qualitative research approach as compared to mixed methods research approach.

3.2.4 Pragmatic

Creswell (2003) argues that pragmatist researchers put more emphasis on the 'what' and 'how' of the research problem. The pragmatic paradigm put research problem as the essential approach to circumnavigate throughout the study. Data collection and analysis approaches are also allied with research problem of the study (Morgan, 2007). Pragmatic researchers also put more attention on mixed approaches which negate the research design of this study (Morgan, 2007). Regrettably, this paradigm was not used because of the nature of this study.

3.3 Research design

This study used exploratory study research design. An exploratory study is conducted when more or less facts are recognised but more evidence is needed to develop a feasible theoretical framework (Sekaran and Bougie, 2010). According to Pettersen, Goddard, Huang, Couch, Greenblatt, Meng and Ferrin (2004), an exploratory study is carried out when there is inadequate information about the matter being studied. The purpose of conducting an exploratory research was to get deeper understandings on the challenges that African women who are in managerial positions at the NRF face. Sauders, Lewis and Thornhill (2007) argue that exploratory study may assist the researcher to find the important variables that flawlessly address the research problem.

Additionally, this form of research design supports in diagnosing a situation and formulating hypotheses to address the research problem (Sauders *et al.*, 2007). This approach was selected in support of Sauders *et al.* (2007:34), who highlighted that exploratory studies "are a valuable means of finding out what is happening, seeking new insights, asking questions and assessing a phenomenon in a new light". The purpose of selecting an exploratory research is that it puts more emphases on an area which is under-researched.

3.4 Research objectives

The rationale of this study is that South Africa need to develop better strategies to enhance transformation and in particular the ascendance of women to management positions so that they make meaningful contribution to the development of SA. To do this, SA need to develop a better understanding of and address the challenges faced by African women occupying managerial positions in various organisations like the NRF. To do this, the research study first aimed at identifying the barriers that hinder African women from entering into management and the challenges they encounter once they occupy these positions. The objectives of this study were as follows;

1. To investigate if there is lack of dedication and commitment, perceived or real, by the organisation to advance African women.

2. To examine the impact of 'glass ceiling' on African women wanting to occupy management positions at the NRF.

3. To explore the degree to which conflicting roles are a hindrance to African women managers' competence at the NRF.

4. To investigate the impact of not having enough women role models on African women managers at the NRF.

5. To investigate the extent to which the legacy of apartheid and patriarchy have an impact on the slow increase of African women occupying managerial positions at the NRF.

3.5   Research questions

In order to achieve the objectives of this study, the researcher attempted to discuss and address the following questions;

1. Does lack of dedication and commitment by the NRF, if any, have an impact on the advancement of African women into management positions?

2. What is the impact if any, of "glass ceiling" on African women occupying managerial positions at the NRF?

3. How does conflicting roles impact African women managers competence?

4. Does not having enough role models who are also women managers have an impact on African women managers at the NRF?

5. To what extent have the apartheid legacy and patriarchy contributed to slow increase of African women managers at the NRF?

3.6   Description of the study site

The head office of the NRF is located next to its main funder, the Department of Science and Technology, and next to other research institutions such as, the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, the Innovation Hub, Southern African Research and Innovation Management Association (SARIMA) and so forth. It is situated few kilometres from the University of Pretoria. The organisational structure of the National Research Foundation is explained in Figure 3.1. At the time of the study, the NRF was made up of Research and Innovation Support and Advancement (RISA) and the facilities. The facilities are South African National Bioinformatics Institute (SANBI), South African Environmental Observation Network (SAEON), and South African Astronomical Observatory (SAAO), Hartebeesthoek Radio Astronomy Observatory (Hart RAO), iThemba Labs, South African Institute for Aquatic Biodiversity (SAIAB) and the National zoo. RISA was divided into eight directorates; International Relations & Corporate (IR&C) , Knowledge Fields Development (KFD), Grants Management Systems Administration (GMSA) ,Human and Infrastructure Capacity Development (HICD), Reviews and Evaluation (RE), Applied Research Innovation and Collaboration (ARIC) and Research Chairs and Centres of Excellence (RCCE). At the top of the hierarchy is the NRF board followed by the Chief

Executive Officer (CEO). Because RISA have different directorates, each directorate has its own Executive director who reports directly to the deputy CEO. Each directorate which is also divided into units, have its own directors which report to the executive directors. Below the directors are professional officers and liaison officers whom report to the directors.
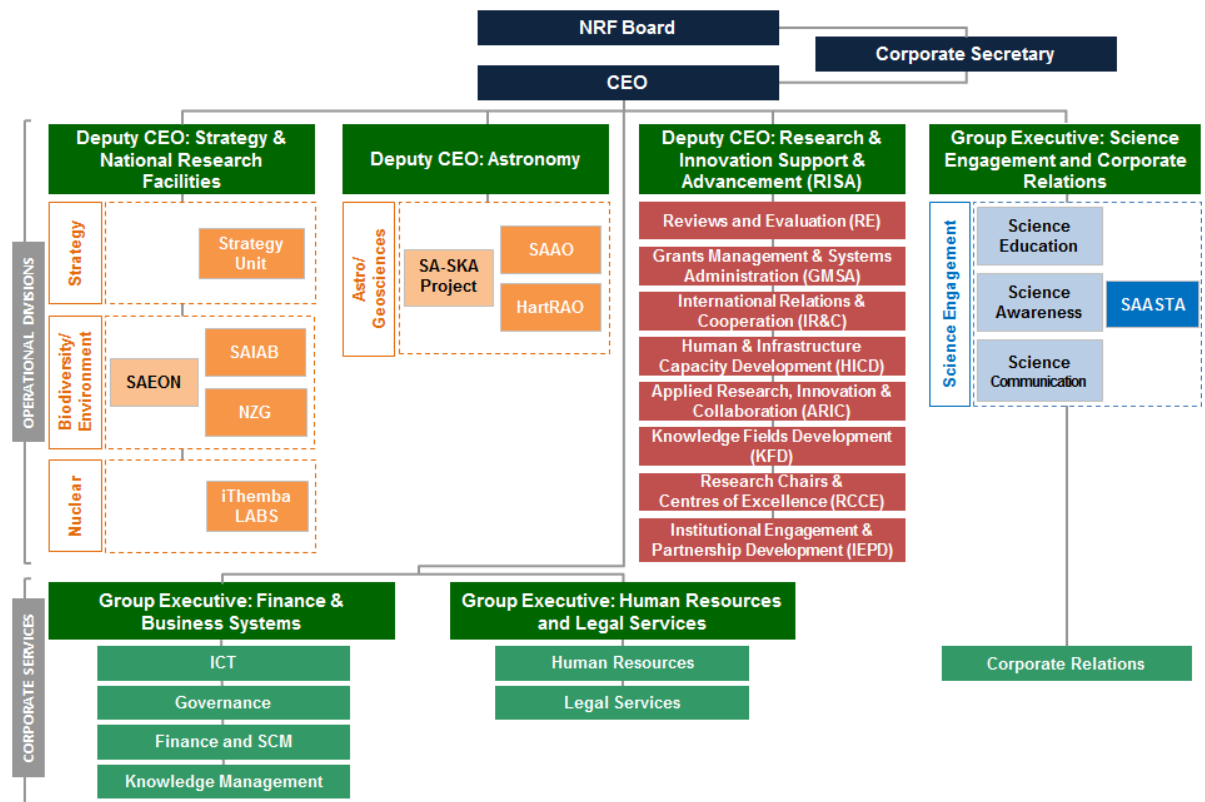
FIGURE 3.1: National Research Foundation organisational structure.
Source: National Research Foundation (2015)

3.7 Research approach

This study investigated the barriers that prevent African women from occupying managerial positions and the challenges that they encounter once they are in these managerial positions, and therefore detailed information was required. It is vital to discuss the methods that were used to conduct this research. Because of the nature of this study and the population, a qualitative method of collecting data was used. Qualitative research provides the understandings into the problem and is also used to uncover trends in thoughts and opinions. According to Thomas (2003), qualitative methods include a researcher describing kinds of characteristics of people and events without comparing events in terms of measurements. Quantitative method on its part quantifies a problem by generating numerical data. "Quantitative methods focus attention on

measurements and amounts of the characteristics displayed by the people and the events that the researcher studies" (Thomas, 2003:40). When both methods are combined, they are referred to as the mixed approach.

3.7.1   Qualitative methods

According to Miles, Huberman and Saldaña (2013), the methods of qualitative research include in-depth interviews, focus groups and reviews of documents for types of themes. "Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed, that is, how people make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world" (Merriam, 2009:13). Denzin and Lincoln (2005) argue that the qualitative researchers analyse things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. Additionally, qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of explanatory, material practices that makes the world visible. Because of the nature of the study, qualitative method was used to gather as much information as possible about the barriers that African women managers at the NRF had to go through before entering into management and the challenges that these women face once they enter into management. The use of qualitative method enabled the participants to analyse things in their natural settings, and gave them the opportunity to share their experiences, explain and discuss the challenges they face every day and how they overcome these challenges.

3.8   Sampling method

According to Cooper and Schindler (2006), sampling is a process of selecting a certain number from the target population to represent the entire population. Sampling assists the researcher draw conclusions about the population of the sample derived (Mugo, 2002). It is important to highlight that there are two kinds of sampling techniques that can be used by the researchers. These sampling techniques are probability sampling and non-probability sampling. According to Rubin and Babbie (2014), probability sampling involves the selection of random sample from a list containing the names of everyone in the population being sampled. In probability sampling, every element in the population has an equal probability of being selected as a sample. Probability sampling is founded on the idea that the people or events that are chosen as a sample are chosen because the researcher has some notion of probability that these will be a

representative cross-section of people or events of the whole population (Denscombe, 1998). This study used non-probability sample design. Yates (1981) argues that non-probability sample employs subjective methods to decide which elements are included in the sample. Because the researcher already knew the structure of the NRF and the employees, this study used judgment sampling technique to select the population. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2010), judgment sampling refers to the selection of subjects that are mostly advantageous or in the best position to provide information that is needed.

3.9 Sample size

Dattalo (2008) argues that determining the sample is very important and is often the difficult step in planning a study. According to Dattalo (2008), the cost of studying an entire population is usually prohibited to both those being studied and the researcher in terms of time, privacy and money. thus, a subset of given population must be selected; this is called sampling. The total number of African women occupying managerial positions at the NRF is fifteen. Because there is a small number of African women occupying managerial positions at the NRF, requests to participate in this study were sent to all fifteen women via email. Due to unavailability, only eleven out of fifteen were interviewed.

Dattalo (2008) argues that since sampling is the process of selecting population elements to study, it addresses two basic issues; (i) how elements of the population will be selected, (ii) how many elements will be selected. Selecting a set of elements from population in such a way that descriptions of those elements accurately portray characteristics of the population from which they were selected is the ultimate goal of sample design (Desu and Raghavarao, 1990). Another goal of sampling design, according to Desu and Raghavarao (1990) is to yield highest precision per unit cost. As mentioned above, due to the small number of the population (African woman managers at the NRF), requests to participate were sent to all the African woman holding managerial positions at the NRF. The interviews were audio recorded and all the participants signed the consent form.

According to Dattalo (2008), generalisation from a sample can lead to errors simply because a sample is only part of a population. Giving elements in the population the opportunity to participate assisted in preventing errors. Dattalo (2008) defines two kinds of errors; the sampling error and the non-sampling error. Sampling error is also known as 'bias' and it refers

to a situation whereby there are too many elements of one kind and not elements of another kind. According to Cuddeback, Wilson, Orme and Combs-Orme (2004), the non-sampling error is more serious than the sampling error because it cannot be controlled by increasing the sample size. Dattalo (2008) argues that before calculating a sample size, the researcher needs to determine a few things about the target population and the sample they need. These included;

- Population size

- Margin of error (Confidence Interval): It needs to be clear how much error to allow

- Confidence level: How confident does a researcher want to be that the actual mean falls within their confidence interval?

- Standard of deviation: How much variance to expect in their responses?

3.10 Data collection method

The researcher used both primary and secondary data collection methods in order to address the research objectives. The primary data refers to the original data that the researcher collects for the purpose of his/her own study (Welman *et al.*, 2005). For primary data collection, the researcher made use of face to face interviews. Secondary data, on the other hand, refers to data that has already been gathered by other researchers. "Secondary data is typically published in journal articles, books, and other sources that might be useful to the researcher" (Cavana, Delahaye and Sekaran, 2001:462). Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2000) argue that secondary data comprises both raw data and published summaries. For secondary data, the researcher used the internet, NRF data obtained from the Human Resources department, published journal articles, NRF documents, textbooks, and government websites. A comprehensive literature survey was carried out in order to provide a detailed summary of the challenges that African women face in their managerial positions. The purpose of the literature review according to Cavana *et al.* (2001:57) is to ensure that all the "important variables from previous research that have an impact on the research problem are taken into consideration. In addition, a well-researched literature review forms the foundation on which research is built."

3.11   Measuring instruments

It is important to mention that there are different kinds of survey methods that the researcher could have used to gather information about this study. But because of nature of this topic, interviews were used to collect data. Other research instrument options includes the following; interviews (personal interviews, telephone interviews), mail surveys and questionnaires. Mail surveys are forwarded or sent to a sample of people selected, with directions on how to fill out the survey and send it back enclosed. According to Burgess (2001), a questionnaire is basically a 'tool' for gathering and recording data about a particular concern of interest. It is mostly made up of a list of questions, but should also include clear instructions and space for answers. Questionnaire should aim at achieving certain objectives. "Questionnaires should always have a definite purpose that is related to the objectives of the research, and it needs to be clear from the outset how the findings will be used" (Oppenheim, 1992:1). Since the research data was collected using face to face interviews, the researcher firstly discussed the motivation for the study with the research participants to ensure clarity and understanding. Interviews are believed to be a good method for collecting data in exploratory research because it allows the researcher to get a deep insight and understanding (Quinlan, 2011). A brief explanation of the measuring instrument (interviews) is given below.

3.11.1   Interviews

The World Bank Institute (2007) explained that the main purpose of conducting interviews is to collect information from a single person through a systematic and structured format. Furthermore, interviews are divided into two; the structured and unstructured interviews. The World Bank Institute also discussed the advantages and disadvantages of conducting interviews to collect data. Interviews allowed participants to talk about their experiences and to elaborate where explanation was needed. Participants were allowed to ask questions were they required clarity. This tool assisted to get as much information as possible from the interviewees. These interviews took about 40 minutes each and were audio-recorded. Creswell (2012) states that a qualitative interview take place when investigators ask participant's general open-ended questions and record their responses. Participants were encouraged to participate freely and were given the opportunity to ask questions. Creswell (2012) credited asking open ended questions in qualitative research, when he confirms that the participants are allowed to freely share their experiences without being disturbed by any perspective of the researcher. Additionally, Kvale

(1996), and Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011), cited in Shezi (2014), refers to an interview as an involvement of ideas between the two or more people on a topic with the aim of producing knowledge. Interviews, according to Cohen *et al.* (2011), gives the participants the opportunity to participate.

3.11.2 Advantages of interviews

The advantages of using interviews include;

- Interviews allows the interviewers to make follow up questions and can assist get clarity where needed.

- Interviews can assist the interviewer to acquire more information about the interviewee during the interview. It also assists the interviewer to see how the participants feel about the topic at hand.

- Interviews gives the interviewees the opportunity to tell their stories and can assist in drawing reliable and valid conclusions.

3.12 Data analysis

Data analysis refers to the exploration of raw data that is collected with the aim addressing a research objective. "Exploring of the raw data collected in an attempt to identify the underlying themes, insights, and relationships within the phenomenon being researched" (Cavana *et al.*, 2001:20). As mentioned previously, this study collected qualitative data from the respondents using the face to face interviews as a measuring instrument. The interviews were checked for accuracy and completeness and were analysed by the researcher. The information from the interviews was captured and processed using the qualitative data software known as Thematic analysis. According Braun and Clarke (2006), Thematic analysis gives the necessary time or opportunity for flexibility in the researcher's choice of theoretical framework. "Some other methods of analysis are closely tied to specific theories, but thematic analysis can be used with any theory the researcher chooses. Through this flexibility, thematic analysis allows for rich, detailed and complex description of your data" (Braun and Clarke, 2006:79). Themes were identified using the interview recordings. What counted as themes were points that captured the

key ideas about the data in relation to the research question and also represented some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set.

3.13 Validity and Reliability of Data

Cooper and Schindler (2003) explains that there are two key principles for evaluating a measuring tool specifically validity and reliability. In this study, a measuring tool are interviews. These two principles are explained underneath with regards to how they relate to the measuring instrument.

3.13.1 Validity

Validity describes the extent to which the tool measures what is proposed to measure in order for the researcher to be able to address the objectives of the study. "Validity refers to the degree to which the instrument measures what it intended or supposed to measure in order for the researcher to be able to address the objectives of the study" (Cooper and Schindler, 2003:243). According to Hair, Bush and Ortinau (2006:276), validity is also "related to the extent to which the conclusions drawn from the research are true". Kimberlin and Winetrstein (2008) defines validity as the degree to which an instrument measures what it purports to measure. Validity requires an instrument to be reliable. However, an instrument can be reliable without being valid (Kimberlin and Winetrstein, 2008). Qualitative research method was used in order to meet the objectives of the study. The interviews were used to obtain as much information as possible from all African woman managers at the NRF. The interview questions were not bias and this increased the chances of both validity and reliability.

3.13.2 Reliability

When a variable is consistent, it can be referred to as reliable (Hardy and Bryman, 2009). Reliability pertains to the capacity of the measuring instruments to produce consistent results if tested multiple times (Zikmund, Babin, Carr and Griffin, 2013). According to classical test theory cited in Kimberlin and Winetrstein (2008) any score achieved by a measuring instrument is collected from both the "true" score, which is unknown, and "error" in the measurement process. The true score is fundamentally the score that a person would have received if the measurement were flawlessly accurate. According to Joppe (2000), reliability refers the extent to

which results are dependable overtime and a precise representation of the total population of the study. Furthermore, when results of the study can be repeated under comparable methodology the research instrument is then considered reliable. Embodied on Joppe (2000) is the idea of replicability and repeatability of the observations. Kirk and Miller (1986) recognized three kinds of reliability in qualitative research; the extent to which a measurement is given recurrently, the constancy of measurement over time and the similarity of capacities within a specific period of time. This research study comprised of five interview questions of which most answers were almost similar. This research indicated that a number of women at the NRF feel that there are still barriers that prevent African women from entering into management. Literature review in chapter two also indicated that African women are still underrepresented in management and that when they finally climb the corporate ladder, they are sometimes not recognized and acknowledged as their male counterparts. Most participants were in agreement with the large body of the literature. Because of these reasons, the researcher viewed the results of this study as reliable.

3.14 Ethical considerations

Every researcher needs to be aware of ethical issues before attempting to conduct a research study. According to Beauchamp and Childress (1994), ethics is a broad term for numerous ways of understanding and examining the moral life, it is also concerned with perspectives on the right and proper behaviour. Stevens (2010) also defines ethics as the essential principle of decent human behaviour. Hence, the researcher took into consideration the moral principles. This study was ethically reviewed and approved by the University of KwaZulu Natal Management, IT and Governance Research Ethics Committee. Interviews done during this study were confidential, and the interviewees were allowed to withdraw from participating in this study if they chose to no longer participate or feel that the questions are not appropriate. Stevens (2013) also explains that the sensitive nature of ethics needs to be considered and confidentiality is of utmost importance as well as informing the participants of their rights to withdraw from the study if need be. Sekaran (2003) defines ethical considerations as the code of conduct while one is conducting a research. A letter which assures confidentiality was signed and given to the participants, this letter stated that information/ data collected will be treated with respect and confidentiality. No names were mentioned in the dissertation.

3.15   Summary of the chapter

This chapter has presented the method in which the research was conducted to meet the research objectives. This chapter discussed the data collection method, the research design that was used for this study, and the sampling methods. This research project sought to investigate the challenges faced by African women in management positions. Due to the fact that the research was exploratory in nature, qualitative research approach was utilized with regards to the research methodology. Primary data was collected through a face to face interviews which assisted the researcher to obtain the views African women mangers at the NRF. A non-random sampling technique known as judgement sampling was used to narrow down the research population into two ways. Secondary data was collected from journal articles, textbooks and government websites on African women in management. Primary data was captured using the thematic analysis. Chapter 4 will present and discuss the empirical research findings.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a presentation and discussion of the research findings based on the data collected from eleven African women occupying managerial positions at the NRF from different departments. Data was analysed in alignment with the research objectives of the study which was to investigate the challenges faced by African women managers occupying managerial positions particularly at the NRF. Discussions of the results are to be linked to extant literature which was outlined in chapter 2 of this study.

4.2 Response rate

For this study, fifteen African women occupying managerial positions at NRF were required to form the sample. However, a total of eleven African women responded and participated in the study. The response rate from research participants was therefore 73%. The high response rate could be attributed to the following factors (1) The researcher is currently working for NRF (2) The researcher is well-known within NRF departments; therefore, an element of trust exists between the researcher and African women occupying managerial positions at the NRF.

4.3 Demographics of the research participants

Under this section, background information of the research participants is discussed. An overview of the attributes of participants will be provided.

4.3.1 Gender

All the participant were female.

4.3.2 Age of participant

The first question of the interview sought to find out the age of the re spondent. The findings from this question are presented in a bar chart in Figure 4.1. Most (50%) of the respondents for this study were between the ages of thirty and forty (30-40). Thirty five percent (35%) of the respondents were aged between 40-50 years and the remaining fifteen percent (15%) of the African women managers were between the ages of twenty and thirty years. The results concur with Schoof (2006:10) who argued that there is a shortage of young African women in leadership positions. Buengeler *et al.* (2016) also argued that young managers often face unique challenges, among these challenges is being accepted as leaders or managers by their employees. Zenger and Folkman (2015) also argue that young managers are not fully trusted, as a result, their ideas and opinions are not often recognized. They are observed as less experienced managers and their judgment is more frequently questioned.
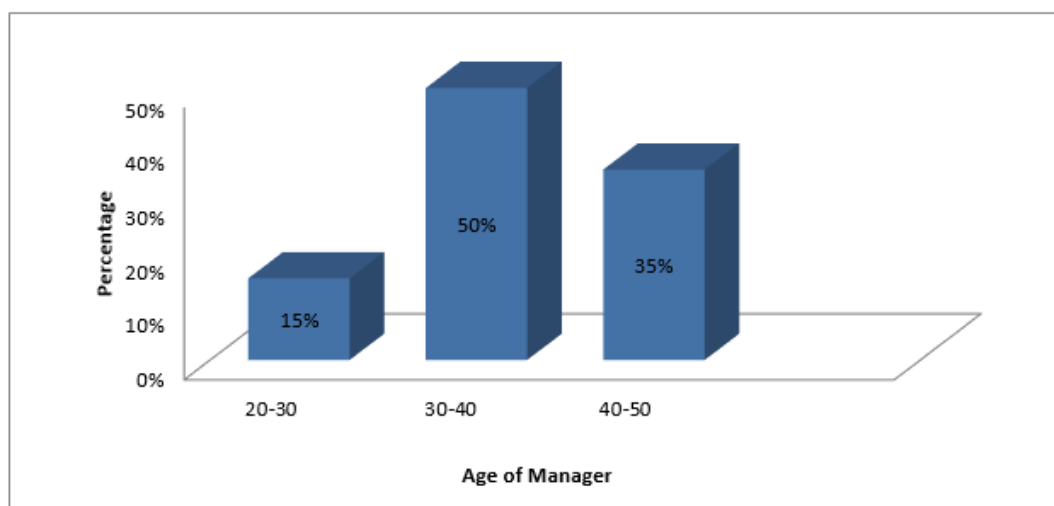
FIGURE 4.1: Age of respondents

4.3.3 Race of participants

The second question on the background information of the participants wanted to inquire about the race of the respondent. For this study, one hundred percent (100%) of the sample was African women.

4.3.4 Highest qualification

The results on the highest educational levels of participants are depicted in figure 4.2. In Figure 4.2, fifty percent (50%) of the participants held a Master's degree as their highest qualification and twenty five percent (25%) had a PhD. Participants who were in possession of a honours degree and bachelor's degree were sixteen point five (16.5%) and eight point five percent (8.50%), respectively. The findings on background information of the African women managers are vital. This is because it provides insight into the characteristics of all participants of this study.
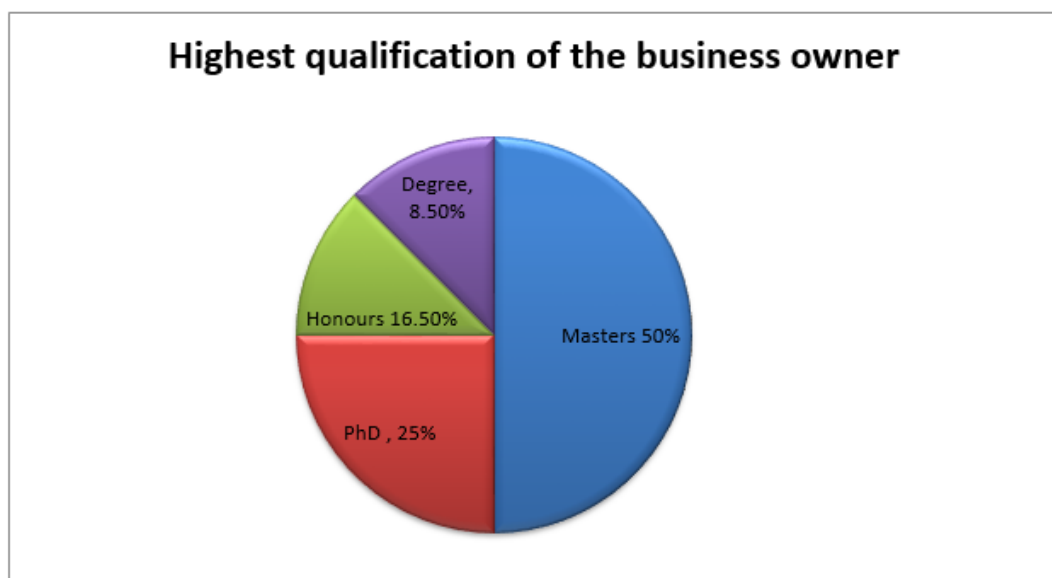
FIGURE 4.2: Highest qualification obtained

4.3.5 Previous work experience

This evaluate whether the participants had gained managerial experience from previous employment before joining the NRF. Results from this question are shown in the table below.

Previous management experience of manager	Frequency
Previous work experience as a manger	8
No experience as a manager before joining the NRF	3

TABLE 4.1: Previous Management Experience

Table 4.1 indicates that 8 out of 11 African managers at the NRF already had managerial experience before joining the NRF. The section that follows provides empirical findings and a discussion of the results in alignment with the research objectives of the research project.

4.4 Presentation and discussion of results

Under this section the results of the study will be presented and discussed. Presentation and discussion of the findings will be discussed according to the research objectives of the study.

4.4.1 Research objective one

Objective one aimed at finding out if there is lack of dedication and commitment to advance African women by the organisation.

Themes	Frequency
Organisation is dedicated to advancing African women	4
Organisation is not dedicated to advancing African women	7

TABLE 4.2: The impact of the lack of commitment to advancing minorities

The main objective was to find out if the NRF is playing its part in ensuring that African women managers are not discriminated because of their gender and race. The aim of this objective was to also investigate if the organisation's human resources department is linking diversity to organisational issues whenever possible and to examine and monitor human resource processes to ensure that they produce diverse outcomes. Four participants out of eleven participants agreed that the organisation is committed to ensuring non-discriminatory working environment for them.

Participant one mentioned that:

"The organisation is trying, we have programmes and workshops that are meant to promote diversity."

Three participants also agreed that the organisation is committed to ensuring that African women stand an equal chance of progressing to managerial positions as their male counterparts, and that when they are finally in these positions they are acknowledged and respected as their male counterparts. They also acknowledged that there are initiatives such as diversity workshop that are put in place in order to ensure that they are not unfairly treated. However, the majority of participants disagreed with the four participants and highlighted some of the issues that convinced them that the organisation is not doing enough to ensure that they are treated equally.

Participant two mentioned that even when they work hard their efforts and dedication goes unnoticed.

"Nothing is done to ensure that we are treated fairly, but we are always questioned."

Participant three also argued that:

"Even when we attend those diversity workshops, they don't come back to us and tell us the way forward."

Participant four

"Sometimes I feel that I was only hired because they had to."

The other four participants answered 'No' to the question of whether the organisation is doing enough to ensure that they are treated fairly.

These results were in agreement with the literature which states that the barriers that prevent women from occupying managerial position is unwillingness of the organisation to promote diversity in its management (Bell and Nkomo, 2001). According to research conducted by Powell (1999) over a decade ago, men continue to be dominant in senior management and it is difficult to eliminate prejudice and discrimination in the workplace. "Men are likely to be more comfortable with other men - *the old boy network*" (Bell and Nkomo, 2001:3). Promoting and hiring decisions are frequently unstructured and open to bias (Bell and Nkomo, 2001).

To investigate the challenges that African women face in their managerial positions a follow up question meant to identify the obstacles encountered by African women managers climbing the

corporate ladder at the NRF was asked. The main focus of the first objective was to identify the obstacles faced by African women trying to climb the corporate ladder at NRF. To address objective one, the researcher asked one question to identify the challenges that are currently faced by African women managers in the organisation.

Challenges encountered by African women managers climbing the corporate ladder at the NRF

Question five of part one of the interview questions guided the researcher to discover the challenges encountered by the participants in their corporate journey. Table 4.3 below demonstrate the results.

Themes	Frequency
Recognition in decision making	2
Working hard to prove your potential and competencies	4
Capacity constrains	2
Age	3

TABLE 4.3: Challenges encountered by African women managers at the NRF

Table 4.3 highlights four themes that were most common and identified from the respondents. Most (4) of the respondents revealed that working hard to prove your potential and competencies was the major challenge that they were facing as they were climbing the cooperate ladder. These results are in agreement with a large body of existing literature. According to Spierenburg and Wels (2006), one African woman stated that being a woman in management means you have to work hard to prove yourself and show people that you deserve to be a manager. Participant one was in agreement with this view as she mentioned that:

"In order for an African woman to get a promotion to executive positions, she must work four times harder to impress the superiors."

The other two participants revealed that women are not recognized in decision making. This concurs with literature. According to Donaldson (1997), in the past, powers were not equally distributed to men and women especially in decision making processes because men were superior to women, as a result, women had to take orders from men. Bradley (1989) further

argues that the sexual division of labour in the workplace maintains that the generalization 'men control, women obey' continues to hold. Participants three also added that:

"At some point I feel like I'm not recognized in strategic decision but I'm there for tick box compliance."

Carli and Eagly (2001) argued that even when African women managers are in managerial position, their contributions to decision making are not respected as that of men because it is believed that they do not possess enough managerial skills needed. Furthermore, the other two participants also acknowledged that there are some capacity constraints that hinders them in climbing up the cooperate ladder. This includes their educational level, lack of skills, and experience. According to Davis and Maldonado (2015), the factors that promote barriers for African women to occupy managerial positions is the 'pipeline problem' which implies that women with the appropriate educational background are not available, therefore, they are not hired. Lastly, the other two (2) participants of the sampled population revealed that age is also a challenge for women to acquire managerial positions in the organisation. Participant three mentioned that:

"There is a correlation between the level of your experience and your age limit"

Participant five added that:

"Age is a sabotage."

4.4.2 Research objective two

To examine the impact, if any, of 'glass ceiling' on African women wanting to occupy management positions at the NRF.

The main focus of research objective two was to investigate the extent to which the glass ceiling negatively affects African women wanting to occupy management positions at the NRF. Precisely, the aim is to investigate whether their gender and race is hindering them from moving into management positions.

Impact of glass ceiling

Section two of the interview wanted to discover the impact of glass ceiling on African women climbing the cooperate ladder. Various themes were highlighted and identified for this question:

Themes	Frequency
Age and gender	7
Performance evaluation	2
Section process	2

TABLE 4.4: Impact of glass ceiling

Table 4.4 shows that most (7) of the participants agreed that age and gender is the major bottleneck preventing African women to accelerate and progress in their career. This concurs with literature. According to Bell and Nkomo (2001), African women face prejudice barriers, gender difficulties and defeat cultural confusions. Participant one is also in agreement with the findings as she comments that:

"In order for an African woman to get a promotion to executive positions, she must work four times harder than a white woman."

Participant four also eluded that:

"Gender inequalities are still an issue in this contemporary society."

Hymowitz and Schellhardt (1986) also argued that glass ceiling is a barrier that is not seen for African (women) climbing the cooperate ladder. These findings also concur with the body of literature that women are judged as unsuitable for management positions because of their gender and age (Bell and Nkomo, 2001).

Participant seven is also in agreement with the findings that she comments that:

"The percentage of African women entering managerial positions is still low because of gender prejudice that under estimate women in this country."

Spierenburg and Wels (2006) further argues that tokenism is a great challenge for black women entering management.

The two participants highlighted that performance evaluation was not a barrier to their career growth at the NRF. Participant three mentioned that:

"My performance is evaluated based on my job description which I find it fair."

The other two of the participants revealed that the selection process to executive positions is not easy if you are African women in the organisation. Govender (2005) asserted that there are many barriers that impede African women from moving up the corporate ladder which include lack of training and gender stereotypes. The challenges discussed above are those experienced personally by the sampled African women. It is evident that there is a need for society transformation to address all the issues associated with glass ceiling preventing African women to progress in their careers.

4.4.3   Research objective three

Objective three of this study explored the degree to which conflicting roles are a hindrance to African women managers' competence at the NRF. The main aim of research objective three was to determine whether conflicting roles affects jobs performance of African women. To address objective three, one question was asked to check if the participants are able to maintain balance between responsibilities at work and at home. Table 4.5 displays the results from the question: Are you able to maintain balance between responsibilities at work and at home?

Themes	Frequency
Conflicting roles are affecting my job performance	4
Conflicting roles are not affecting my job performance	7

TABLE 4.5: The impact of conflicting roles

Table 4.5 shows that majority (7) of the respondents agreed that conflicting roles are not affecting their job performance. The other four respondents share the perspective that conflicting roles is affecting their job performance. Participant three shares the same views as those who perceive conflicting roles having an impact in their job performance. She comments that:

"I have to balance between work and my family."

Participants four also mentioned that:

"I have my personal life outside of the working environment."

This concurs with the body of literature. According to research done by Madsen (2012), women are interested in advancing their careers and they also desire to achieve a work life balance outside

their career in comparison to male counterparts. In addition, women sometimes encounter difficulties in combining family and work responsibilities. These difficulties discourage them from taking on the fast pace and demanding schedule of a career (Mello and Phago, 2007). Spaights and Whitaker (1995) further argue that African women are forced into the multiple roles of being a provider, homemaker, protector, disciplinarian, and mother. Ramazan (2010) also argues that work and family conflict is among the most common negative impacts that prevent women from reaching higher management level.

However, there are some participants that revealed that conflicting roles does not affect their job performance.

Participant one mentioned that:

"I don't believe in balance."

Furthermore, Participant five also mentioned that:

"Multi-tasking is a prerequisite for my job."

These findings revealed that most African women do not find it hard to maintain balance between their home and work responsibilities. They also revealed that they do not have difficulty in managing their time.

4.4.4 Research objective four

Research objective four looked at the impact of not having enough women role models on African women at the NRF. The main objective was to determine if not having enough women managers that new women managers can look up to affects the new women managers the NRF.

Themes	Frequency
Not having enough women role models does affects me	1
Not having enough women role models does not affect me	10

TABLE 4.6: The impact of not having enough role models

Table 4.6 reveals that ten out of eleven African women managers at the NRF are not affected by not having enough role models. This opposes literature that not having enough role model is a

challenge to African women wanting to climb the corporate ladder. The inadequate amount of woman role models and mentors and the elimination of women from informal networks serve as obstacles to the advancement of women in reaching managerial positions (Mello and Phago, 2007). Lack of support from both male and female, white and black managers may result to a drop of number of women wanting to occupy managerial positions in an organisation (Cain, 2015). "Mentors could be used to encourage ethnic minority and disadvantaged groups as well as support women to break through the glass ceiling" (Garvey *et al.*, 2014) cited in (Cain, 2015:29). Cain (2015) further argues that mentoring can assist new women managers with regards to advancing their careers. "Mentoring is a resource that can be beneficial to the success of someone building his or her career" (Garvey *et al.*, 2014) cited on (Cain, 2015:29).

Participant one disagreed with literature by revealed that

"Not having women role models does not affect me, in fact I prefer males."

Three participants also mentioned that they have male role models and that not having female role models does not affect them.

Participant four argued that;

"I don't see the importance of having role models, I'd rather concentrate on becoming someone's role model myself."

Two participants also revealed that it's hard to make friends with other women managers, and mentioned that it is easier to make male friends instead, as a result, they prefer male mentors or role models. One participant mentioned that not having women mentors is hard because sometimes male managers are not willing to associate themselves with women and are not willing to help

"Sometimes you just see and feel that you don't fit in! Some men still see women as inferior. Not having a woman mentor did affect me."

This was in agreement with literature: Linstead *et al.* (2004) argue that most female managers do not have role models, instead they have male mentors and that women managers receive lower pays as compared to that of men. Because of the negative stereotype surround women and the impact of racial discrimination, African women have few role models. This is a challenge because they are not encouraged even when they face difficulties in their roles. They are isolated

and are hardly included in the decision making processes. African women have few people to look up to, as a result, they tend to face difficulties in their managerial positions (Cain, 2015).

4.4.5 Research objective five

Research objective five investigated the extent to which the legacy of apartheid and patriarchy have an impact in slow increase in a number of African women occupying managerial positions at the NRF.

The main aim of research objective five was to determine the extent to which the legacy of apartheid and patriarchy have an impact in slow increase in a number of African women occupying managerial positions at the NRF. To address objective five, the researcher asked research participants whether they agree to the fact that injustices of the past contribute to the sluggish growth of African women occupying managerial role in the organisation or not. Table 4.7 below displays the findings of this objective.

Themes	Frequency
Legacy of apartheid and patriarchy have a large impact on African women wanting to advance into management positions	9
Legacy of apartheid and patriarchy does not have a large impact on African women wanting to advance into management positions	2

TABLE 4.7: The impact of legacy of apartheid and patriarchy

Table 4.7 shows that majority (9) of the participants agreed that the legacy of Apartheid has an impact in the slow increase in a number of African women occupying managerial positions at the NRF. This concurs with the literature that gender discrimination in the workplace is caused by women exclusion in the decision making in the past (Moumakoe, 2013). Because African women face combined discrimination, it makes it hard for them to enter into managerial positions or to be promoted to managerial positions even if their qualifications allow them (Carli and Eagly, 2001). The gender discrimination on women was filtered through a rapid system of race discrimination so that white women would have been negatively affected, but black women would have been subjected to the combined negative impact of both gender and race discrimination" (De La Rey and Duncan,2003:364).

Participant one mentioned that:

"As an African woman you are discouraged to apply for managerial positions because of your race and gender. Our society as blacks created a system were women are inferior to men".

This concurs with the literature. According to Nkomo (2001) African women had to struggle with both racism and sexism. Because African women face combined discrimination, it makes it hard for them to enter into managerial positions or to be promoted to managerial positions even if their qualifications allow them (Carli and Eagly, 2001).

Participant two mentioned that:

"There is still a long way to go! When you finally get a job as a manager some people are convinced that it had to do with your gender or race."

Participant three mentioned that:

"Sometimes you are made to believe that you only got into management because of the policies that were introduced like Affirmative Action, as if you don't have enough qualification."

Participant four mentioned that:

"People always question how you got the position"

Participant five mentioned:

"Being an African woman in managerial position is hard!"

Literature also alluded that African women are sometimes questioned on how they progressed to their managerial positions "It is hard work to overcome prejudices that come with Affirmative Action appointments. The notion that your sex and skin colour is the reason for your appointment is experienced as very dis-empowering." (Interviews July, 2000) cited in (Spierenburg and Wels, 2006:87). "Once women have attained management positions, many discover that the organisation commitment to their success stops there" (Spierenburg and Wels, 2006:93). Spierenburg and Wels (2006) also argue that new women managers do not have access to company information, they do not own the terrain and they do not have same power and support systems. "I have the feeling that the organisation wasn't really committed to having black women be successful, it was like running into a brick wall" (Interview June, 2000) done by (Spierenburg and Wels, 2006:94).

Participant six mentioned that:

"As long as apartheid history is still written and it's still on the internet, racism will never die, yes, Apartheid and Patriarchy does contribute to slow growth of African women in management."

Participant seven mentioned that:

"Our experiences with African men are not the same, and our experiences with white woman are not the same, because of South African history of apartheid and patriarchy."

According to Holvino and Blake-Beard (2004), African women managers do not receive the same pay as white women, or male managers in general. "African women receive lower pay than white men and women as well as men of colour, and they must learn to maintain a positive self-image when confronted with 'micro aggressions' that could halt promotions, mentoring, and success" (Holvino and Blake-Beard, 2004:176).

Participant eight mentioned that:

"We will never be good enough but the only way to survive is to ignore all these challenges we are faced with."

Participant nine mentioned that:

"Even when there is no discrimination but because you know the South African history you expect to be discriminated."

Hymowitz and Schellhardt (1986) suggests psychological or internalised discrimination as one the barriers. This is a result of historical discrimination against women and black people. The idea that women are not meant to occupy management jobs and the belief that men prefer the high stakes environment of top management while women prefer positions that have greater job security and fewer challenges. "The maternal instinct will trump women's career motivation" (Hymowitz and Schellhardt, 1986:5).

4.5 Summary of the chapter

To conclude this chapter, a presentation and discussion of the research findings where provided. Background information which allows one to understand the characteristics of African women was presented. The sample of this comprised of only African women. Majority were between the age of 30 to 50 years old. The results showed that most of the sampled African women held a post graduate qualification. For most of the African women their educational background was highly related to the position they are currently holding. The results of this study revealed that there are some challenges facing African women in managerial positions at NRF. Furthermore, some

participants acknowledged that glass ceiling is hindering their upward movement in climbing the cooperate ladder. However, some African women denied these barriers associated with glass ceiling at the NRF. The results indicate that conflicting roles do not affect the overall performance of African women in managerial positions. The results also indicated that not having enough women role models does not affect African women managers at the NRF. Lastly, the findings revealed that the outcomes of the apartheid government injustices are still present which is also an impediment to African women climbing their cooperate ladder.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1   Conclusion

The overall objective of this study was to explore the challenges encountered by African women managers at the NRF. The literature reviewed was relating to reasons for shortage of African women in management positions. The first critical area covered the barriers that prevent African women from occupying management positions. Thereafter the challenges that African women encounter once they finally get these management positions. A review of barriers to entry was crucial on the premise that it answered the question of why there is a sluggish growth of African women progressing or promoted to managerial positions at the NRF, this was crucial because it provided the SA history of apartheid and patriarchy and how it impacts African women managers' growth. The second crucial area focused on the challenges that African women encounter in their jobs as managers, this was also crucial because it provided the experiences, (negative and positive) that African woman managers face at the NRF and how they overcome these challenges and the strategies they adopt in order to excel in their positions. To ensure equal rights in the workplace and to eliminate discrimination, the SA government introduced laws that favoured those who were historically disadvantaged, for example women, black people in SA.

An interview based survey was conducted with eleven African women managers at the NRF. Due to the fact that the study was exploratory, data was collected using qualitative method. Thematic analysis was used to analyse data. The findings revealed that African women are

still experiencing a number of barriers to entry in management. Some barriers include; lack of commitment by the organisation to promote African women managers, glass ceiling, think manager think white make stereotype, age limits, inadequate skills and education, conflicting roles, lack of support from other women managers and unfair selection/promotion. The findings also revealed that when women are finally promoted to managerial positions they do not get the respect and acknowledgement as that of their male counterparts and their mistakes are noticed and are remembered longer. Women often feel disrespected and isolated. The study also revealed that the majority of women at the NRF do not find it challenging to balance between work tasks and family tasks. Women managers are often penalised for making errors while their male counterparts are praised for taking risks, young women managers are not fully trusted as a result, their ideas and opinions are seldom recognised. They are also observed as less experienced managers and their judgment is more frequently questioned. Because young managers do not possess many years of experience, their lack of experience leads others to question their technical expertise and professionalism.

Although all women experience similar barriers, it could be argued that the degrees to which they experience these barriers are different. The experiences of African women and white women in management are not the same because African women struggle with both racism and sexism. Although, the findings revealed this, it is important not to undermine the fact that education lays a strong foundation for the establishment of successful managers. Because of SA apartheid history, a number of African women did not get a chance to get formal education and training, and to accumulate the skills that are needed for one to be a good manager. In addition to this, education increases opportunities for individuals. One can also argue that the burden of some challenges can be reduced with education. For example, the ability to search and access information is improved with education.

With regard to whether the current government initiatives are assisting African women to overcome some of the barriers that they encounter when they want to progress to management positions, the results reveal that a number of women getting employment increased after these legislations, but there is a very small percentage of African women who were promoted to management positions. The results also revealed that some participants believe that the NRF employ African women as managers with the aim of improving company image because women managers are not involved in the decision making processes and their views are not taken in consideration. Below the conclusions of the study are discussed according to the research objectives of the study.

The first objective was to investigate if there is lack of dedication and commitment, perceived or real, by the NRF. The findings showed that some participants believe that the NRF is not doing enough to ensure that African women progress to managerial positions. Most participant believe that when they finally progress into management positions, the organisation is not doing enough to ensure that they are not discriminated and that they receive the same acknowledgement as their male counterparts. Although some participants feel that they are qualified for their positions, they still think that there is a possibility that they were employed because of their race and gender, as a result, their opinions and contributions sometimes go unnoticed.

The second objective was to examine the impact, if any, of glass ceiling on women wanting to occupy management positions at the NRF. The results revealed that there are still barriers that prevent African women from entering into management at the NRF. One of the reasons is that the NRF is a male dominated organisation. Management positions are also dominated by men. The study also revealed that male managers prefer to work with other male managers because they believe that they are capable of doing the job while women managers are not trusted, hence they are given easier tasks. Because of these reasons, women end up working harder than their male counterparts with the aim of proving themselves. They are often not included in the decision making. As managers, they are expected to support and to agree to decisions taken by their male colleagues. The findings also revealed that the history of SA apartheid and patriarchy played a big role in ensuring that African women do not get same opportunities as men and white women.

The third objective was to explore the degree to which the conflicting roles are a hindrance to African women competence at the NRF. The findings revealed that most African woman managers at the NRF do not have difficulty in managing responsibilities at work and home. Seven out of eleven African women managers mentioned that they are able to balance their work and home responsibilities, while some complained that the NRF needs to introduce new policies that favour women. For example the NRF does not provide enough support for pregnant women and when they give birth they are only given four months maternity leave. Some women feel that this is not enough.

The fourth objective was to investigate the impact of not having enough women role models on African women managers at the NRF. Research findings revealed that not having people who are willing to take these women step by step when they enter into management does not have a negative impact on women's competency at the NRF. Ten out of eleven African women manages

mentioned that they prefer male role models over women role models, they also revealed that not having women role models does not affect them in any way.

The fifth objective was to investigate the extent to which the legacy of apartheid and patriarchy has an impact on slow increase in a number of African women occupying management positions at the NRF. The findings revealed that the majority of African women managers at the NRF believe that the history of SA apartheid and a patriarchal society defined African women as a person whose place is in the kitchen and who does not possess the skills that are needed for one to become a manager. African women are still discriminated in the work place even though there are legislations which were introduced with the aim of promoting diversity in the workplace.

5.2   Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it can be recommended that the government should do a follow up on organisations to see if the legislation that was introduced after the SA apartheid really worked. The NRF should also try by all means to promote and manage diversity. In addition to this, priority should be given to the evaluation and monitoring of the impact of current government initiatives on promoting the historically disadvantaged. Within the NRF, there should be departments which focus on the different categories of management. Understanding the challenges that African women in management face would assist in the formulation of policies and programmes that would indeed address the real challenges of African women managers at the NRF and in SA as a whole. In addition to this, it is critical for the NRF to understand the history of SA apartheid and patriarchy. Below, the recommendations of the study are discussed according to the research objectives of the study

The first objective was to investigate if there is lack of dedication and commitment, perceived or real, by the organisation to advance African women. To ensure that African women managers receive equal opportunities as that of men, the NRF should;

- Ensure that human resource department analyse data such as a number of promotions to check if African women are in fact promoted to managerial positions as equally as white women and men. This will assist in determining if they are benefiting from diversity initiatives or not.

- Introduce appropriate systems of measurement and hold leaders responsible for diversity advancement.

- Create a benchmarking team to recognise best practices.

- Contribute in an ongoing formal diversity effort.

- Link diversity to organisational issues on every occasion possible.

- Inspect and monitor human resource processes to guarantee that they produce diverse results.

The second objective was to examine the impact, if any, of glass ceiling on African women wanting to occupy management positions at the NRF. In order to break the glass ceiling, the Government and private companies should invest in training those who were previously disadvantaged. This can be done by introducing women management programmes and support women wanting to enhance their knowledge through funding and human development courses. Women who are already in management positions should be given platforms to share their experiences with government officials employed to ensure that every organisations practice diversity.

The third objective was to explore the degree to which conflicting roles are a hindrance to African women's competence at the NRF. The findings revealed that a number African women at the NRF are able to balance between responsibilities at home and work. The NRF should also be supportive. For example a pregnant women should be allowed to work from home at the later stages of pregnancy without having to take leave.

The fourth objective was to investigate the impact of not having enough women role models on African women at the NRF. A number of African women from the sample indicated that not having enough women role models does not affect them. The organisation should have managers' break away at least three times a year where managers will get to know each other better and build work relationships.

The fifth objective was to investigate whether the legacy of Apartheid and patriarchy has an impact in slow increase of African women occupying managerial positions at the NRF. The NRF should consider the policies that were introduced by the new SA democratic government when hiring, this will ensure that everyone stands an equal chance of being promoted or hired as a manager.

5.3 Future research

This study focused mainly on African women managers at the NRF, future research could possibly investigate other organisations (Private and Public organisations). Other suggestions for future research could be to carry out a comparative study of the barriers to entry which includes men, African women and White women. Under the same note, different sectors such as science and engineering may be included in order to gain more insight into the sectorial uniqueness and diversity that exists within the different business sectors. In addition to this, different locations could be investigated separately, as barriers to entry into management differs with location. For example, African women managers in rural and semi urban environments experience these challenges differently from those managing in upmarket organisations. Lastly, different countries other than South Africa could probably be an area for future research. This could possibly add a different dimension or angle to the field of study. Eventually, the ultimate aim would be to continue to add knowledge to the already existing literature on barriers that prevent African women from occupying managerial positions, and the challenges they encounter once they are in these positions especially in the African context.

5.4 Limitations of the study

According to Baron (2008), limitations of the study are the circumstances that a researcher has no control over. The number of African managers occupying managerial position at the NRF limited the accessibility to a larger number of women of this calibre. To enlarge generalisation, different areas across SA could contribute to future research on similar topic. Because of the nature of this study, both primary and secondary data was used. This study used the NRF as the study site, therefore, the results/ findings did not apply to SA as a whole.

5.5 Summary of the chapter

This final chapter provided a conclusion, recommendations and the limitations of the study. The conclusion was a summary of all the chapters. The recommendations were based on the results. Results indicated that the barriers that prevent African women from occupying at the NRF exists. Findings also indicated that when African women finally enter into management

they face a number of challenges. This chapter recommended a number of strategies that may assist in ensuring that the barriers that prevent African women from managerial positions at the NRF are removed and the challenges they African women managers encounter at the NRF are prevented.

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Appendix A

Participant letter of request

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
School of Management, IT and Governance

Dear Respondent,

Research Project
Researcher: [Mbalenhle Nxumalo] (Telephone number: [079 084 6375])
(Email: [mbalenhle.nxumalo@nrf.ac.za])
Supervisor: [Dr Vangeli Gamede] (Telephone number: [033 260 6101])
(Email: [gamede@ukzn.ac.za])
Research Office: Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Administration, Govan
Mbeki Building, Westville Campus, Tel: + 27 (0)31 260 8350,
Email: hssreclms@ukzn.ac.za

I, Mbalenhle Nxumalo MCom student in the school of **Management, IT and Governance**, at
the University of KwaZulu-Natal. You are invited to participate in a research project entitled
*"The challenges faced by African women in management: A case of the National Research
Foundation."*

Your participation in this project is voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw from
the project at any time with no negative consequence. There will be no monetary gain from
participating in this research project. Confidentiality and anonymity of records will be maintained
by the researcher and School of Management, IT and Governance, UKZN. All collected data
will be used solely for research purposes and will be destroyed after 5 years. This study has been
ethically reviewed and approved by the UKZN Management, IT and Governance Research Ethics
Committee (approval number_HSS/0455/017). The interview should take about 60 minutes/s to
complete. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely

Researcher's signature: —————————————— Date: ——————————————

[Mbalenhle Nxumalo]

Appendix B

Consent agreement form

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
School of Management, IT and Governance

Dear Respondent,

Research Project
Researcher: [Mbalenhle Nxumalo] (Telephone number: [079 084 6375])
(Email: [mbalenhle.nxumalo@nrf.ac.za])
Supervisor: [Dr Vangeli Gamede] (Telephone number: [033 260 6101])
(Email: [gamede@ukzn.ac.za])
Research Office: Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Administration, Govan
Mbeki Building, Westville Campus, Tel: + 27 31 260 4557,
Email: hssrec@ukzn.ac.za

CONSENT

I ———————————————————————————— (full names of participant) hereby
confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project,
and I consent to participating in the research project. I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw
from the project at any time, should I so desire. Additional consent, where applicable

I hereby provide consent to:

Audio-record my interview / focus group discussion	YES / NO
Video-record my interview / focus group discussion	YES / NO
Use of my photographs for research purposes	YES / NO

————————————————   ————————————————
Signature of Participant   Date

Appendix C

Interview questions

1. Have you experienced any challenges as a manager at the NRF?

   - Please tell me about your responsibilities as a manager at the NRF.

   - How do you feel about your managerial role?

   - What have been some of the positive experiences about the role?

   - What have been some of the negative things about the role?

   - Please explain to me the challenges that you feel you face as an African woman manager in the organisation?

   - How do you overcome these challenges?

   - What organisational support structures are in place to support you with some of the challenges you face?

   - To what extent do you feel that this is related to you being a woman manager in the organisation?

2. Would you say glass ceiling has an impact on African women managers wanting to occupy management positions at the NRF?

   - Can you talk me through how you progressed to this position?

   - How did you feel about the selection process that was used?

   - How do you think others (managers, employees and superiors) perceive your performance as a manager?

   - Do you feel that it was not easy to get to your position as a manager?

- Do you feel that you getting this position had to do with your gender and race?

3. Do you think conflicting roles might have an impact on African women managers at the NRF?

    - Are you able to maintain balance between responsibilities at work and at home?

4. Do you think not having enough role models also have a negative impact on African women managers at the NRF?

    - How would you compare the support you are getting in your current position as a manager to the previous position?

    - How do you perceive your relationship with your superiors?

    - Can you describe to me your relationship with your colleagues (other managers)?

5. Do you think the apartheid legacy and patriarchy contribute to slow increase of African women managers at the NRF?

    - Can you explain to me how your performance as a manager is evaluated?

    - How do you feel about your participation in the decision making processes?

    - Do you feel that there is potential for increase of African woman managers at the NRF?

    - Where do you see yourself in the next 5 years?

Appendix D

Ethical clearance certificate

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL ™
INYUVESI YAKWAZULU-NATALI

12 May 2017

Ms Mbalenhle Mandisa Nxumalo (210553146)
School of Management, IT & Governance
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Dear Ms Nxumalo,

Protocol reference number: HSS/0455/017M
Project title: The challenges faced by African women in management: A case of the National Research Foundation

Full Approval – Expedited Application
In response to your application received on 03 May 2017, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol have been granted **FULL APPROVAL.**

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation.   In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

....
Dr Shamila Naidoo (Deputy Chair)

/ms

Cc Supervisor: Dr Vangeli Gamede
Cc Academic Leader Research: Professor Debbie Vigar-Ellis
Cc School Administrator: Ms Debbie Cunynghame

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
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