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Work life balance: the experiences of black female academics at a university in Gauteng

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WORK LIFE BALANCE: THE EXPERIENCES OF BLACK FEMALE ACADEMICS AT A UNIVERSITY IN GAUTENG

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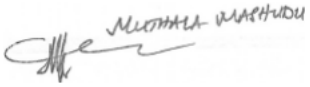
FACULTY: HUMANITIES

A research report submitted to the Department of Social Work, School of Human and Community Development, Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Arts in Occupational Social Work

2021

DECLARATION

I, Mashudu Shadrack Muthala hereby declare that 'Work Life Balance: The Experiences of Black Female Academics at a University in Gauteng' is my own work, and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references. I also declare that this work has not been submitted before for any other degree at any other institution.



25/02/2021

_____ _____

Mashudu Shadrack Muthala **Date**

ABSTRACT

Work-Life balance is becoming a priority among many institutions of higher learning across the globe. This is as employers realize the many benefits of having employees with balanced work and non-work domains. Consequently, this study sought to explore the experiences of black female academics regarding their work-life balance working at a university in Gauteng. This qualitative study followed an exploratory approach to consider the experiences of black female academics on their quest to achieve work-life balance. Ten respondents were purposively sampled to participate in the study. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect the necessary data. Thematic content analysis was used to analyze the collected data. The study revealed the following main findings: Firstly, Black female academics are confronted by both personal and professional challenges that hinder them from achieving a work-life balance. Identified personal challenges included family responsibilities, patriarchal and cultural practices. While work overload, lack of recognition and lack of respect by male senior colleagues were identified as work-related challenges. Secondly, unmarried Black female academics found it easier to strike a work-life balance compared to their married counterparts. This difference was attributed to the additional household duties that married participants are expected to carry out at home. Thirdly, many of Black female academics turn to religion to seek some sort of balance between their work and personal lives. It is envisaged that the findings will help in the development and implementation of strategies geared at enhancing the work-life balance of Black female academics working at various universities. More studies should be conducted to determine or examine how stages of life such as marriage, pregnancy, childbirth, and child rearing affect the performance of female academics at workplaces.

Key words

Experiences; Female academics; University in Gauteng; South African higher education; Work life balance

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to my wife, Vhudivhusi and children, Mufunwa, Uatshila, Wamashudu and Rilinde

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BRICS:	Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa
EAP:	Employee Wellness Programme
EHWP:	Employee Health and Wellness Programme
HE:	Higher Education
DHET:	Department of Education and Training
OECD:	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
SADC:	Southern African Development Community
STATSSA:	Statistics South Africa
UK:	United Kingdom
USA:	United States of America

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Work-life balance is a matter of concern that has an impact on the workers' productivity and their perception by their families. Diverse scholastic views have emerged over the years pertaining to this subject matter. However, few studies focused on the experiences of female academics regarding their work-life balance in South Africa (Sav, 2016; Naz, Fazal & Khan, 2017; Kohll, 2018). Available knowledge on this subject was interrogated with the aim of establishing firstly, the emergence of the work-life concept, the reason for its emergence and what it was initially intended to achieve. Secondly, available international literature regarding women academics and the work-life concept was reviewed. It further reviewed existing literature on women academics and work-life concept, focusing specifically on the South African context. The existing literature on the benefits of work-life balance as well as the consequences of unbalanced work-life is also highlighted. It concludes by synthesizing the reviewed information.

1.2 Identification of the research gap and formulation of the problem statement

Many professional women continue to struggle to strike a balance between their work and private lives (Mokhele, 2013). American female author, Marie Slaughter puts it in perspective when she contends that, "millions of working women face more difficult life circumstances. Some are single mothers; others support husbands who cannot find jobs. Many copes with a work-life in which good day care is either unavailable or very expensive while school schedules do not match their work schedules" (2012: 89). Black women academics are not exempted from these challenges with research findings showing that they continue to face a cocktail of challenges within academia (Pillay, 2009, Magano, 2011, Mokhele, 2013; Dominiguez-Whitehead & Moosa, 2014). Black women academics continue to be marginalized and underrepresented in academia. Available data further shows that Black female academics do not have enough time for research, to publish and present papers as they struggle to balance their professional and family commitments (Pillay, 2009; Magano, 2011). The above factors could negatively affect their work-life balance. The researcher

therefore, contends that there is a need to investigate the experiences of Black female academics. Such investigations might help these women to strike a healthy balance between their work and private lives.

Furthermore, there is a constant need to investigate the experiences of Black female academics in institutions of higher learning. Other researchers support this notion (Collins 2000 in Potgieter and Maleko, 2004 and Maodzwa-Taruvinga and Divala, 2014). Although discussing experiences of Black female academics more than two decades into democracy might be considered a non-issue by some, "the historicity and contingence of Black women academics' personal experiences necessitate ongoing interrogation and understanding of the effects of the nexus of power and identity on academic progression and success" (Maodzwa-Taruvinga and Divala, 2014: 1962). Although the number of Black female academics have succeeded within the country's Higher Education system (HE), documenting their experiences in trying to attain a work-life balance can "never be a once-off event". "There is a need to document their experiences not only to contribute to 'an Afro-centric feminist epistemology but also to constantly remind ourselves of the daily struggles that Black women academics continue to face" (Collins 2000 in Potgieter & Maleko, 2004; Maodzwa-Taruvinga & Divala, 2014). Gaining a better understanding of the characteristics, constraints and social support systems of the university will therefore lead to the development of an appropriate intervention system for enhancing work-life balance among Black female academics.

The successful completion of this study will therefore, provide policy-makers in institutions of higher learning with a better understanding on the personal experiences of women academics, in particular, Black female academics on their quest to strike a work-life balance. Perhaps this could lead to the development of an appropriate intervention system for combating stress-related ailments employees experience because of their inability to strike a balance between work and non-work domains. The strategies developed from the findings could also be used as framework by both public and private academic institutions when implementing employee Health and wellness programmes (EHWPs). Less has been done on work life balance for Black female academics, hence this study sought to close the gap and contribute to the existing body of knowledge by exploring the experiences of Black female academics regarding their work life balance.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTION

What are the experiences of Black female academics regarding their work-life balance?

1.4 Primary aim and secondary objectives

The primary aim of this study was to explore the experiences of Black female academics regarding their work-life balance working at a university in Gauteng. This was achieved through the following specific secondary objectives:

a. To understand the factors perceived by Black female academics in hindering their efforts to achieve a balance between work and non-work domains.
b. To consider the forces responsible for maintaining and furthering work-life balance by Black female academics
c. To describe the views of Black female academics with regard to the strategies currently used by the University to help enhance work-life balance
d. To explore the strategies perceived by Black female academics to be effective ways of helping them achieve work-life balance.

1.5 Rationale of the study

The findings of this study may help us to understand the challenges Black female academics face while balancing between their work and non-work domains. The findings are also likely to reveal the degree to which work-life balance affect the work performance of Black female academics. Carrying out an assessment of work and family dynamics of Black female academics will further provide a deeper understanding of the linkages between work and non-work domains in determining their individual work performance.

1.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: INTERSECTIONALITY THEORY

The basis of this study is intersectionality theory. The term, "intersectionality" was coined by Kimberle Crenshaw in 1989. Its emergence was because of a long-standing interest held by scholarly movement advocating for the intersection of race and gender (Nash, 2008). However, there are conflicting views on where the theory originated. Cole (2009) found that its history can be traced back to feminists of color and critical race theorists to psychology. On the other hand, Syed (2010) argues that the theory originated from within both the legal studies and the humanities as "a way of making sense of interlocking societal oppression experienced by subordinated groups". The theory has since become a significant mechanism used by both the feminist and anti-racist scholars to theorize identity and oppression (Nash, 2008) and has attracted the interest of many authors (Nash, 2008; Cole, 2009; Syed, 2010). Cole defines the intersectionality theory as "a paradigm for theory and research offering new ways of understanding the complex causality that characterizes social phenomena" (Cole, 2009). The term 'intersectionality' appears to cover certain vague notions and obscure ideas at first sight. However, it relates to the fact that certain people exist at the intersection (or 'intertwining') of mechanisms of inequality, such as gender (sexism and transphobia), race and ethnicity (racism), nationality (xenophobia), status (capitalism), disability (validity) or sexual identity (homophobia) (Bauer, 2014). The relevance of the intersectionality theory to the proposed study is multifold.

Existing literature review, as will be shown below, reveal that Black female academics across the globe continue to be confronted by many challenges in their workplaces. Firstly, these challenges include amongst others; discrimination, racism, as well as oppression from male colleagues often fueled by patriarchal tendencies. These challenges are often attributed to the oppression resulting from a cocktail of factors. The theory reveals that women continue to be discriminated against merely because of their gender, leading to sexism and transphobia. These submissions are consistent with the existing literature which shows that patriarchal tendencies that continue to exist in many institutions often lead to sexism and transphobia being perpetrated by male academics. Secondly, the existing literature further reveal that Black female academics are often exacerbated by the colour of their skin. The existing literature reveal that Black female academics face more challenges when compared to their White counterparts. Consequently, the researcher has used this

theory in an attempt to understand the complex causality that characterizes the work- life balance phenomena as experienced by Black female academics within the South African context.

1.8. SUMMARY

This chapter offered an outline of the research and gave the reader an overview of the present status of the topic under review. The following topics were also discussed in the chapter: the problem statement that required the research to be carried out, the motivation and importance of the study, as well as the goals that the study sought to accomplish. In addition, the chapter discussed the meanings of core terms that were adopted in this research. The subsequent chapter will deal with the subject-related literature review.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of Black female academics regarding their work-life balance working at a University in Gauteng. The literature from past studies is presented in this chapter, commencing with the understanding of work life balance. The chapter then proceeds to a general overview of women participation in the labour force and the working women and work-life balance is explored. Afterwards, the perspective of female academics and work-life balance is discussed. The chapter then discusses women academic(s) in higher education in a South African context and work-life balance. The women academics and work life balance at a South African's perspective is explored. The benefits of a balanced work-life living are explored, and the chapter concludes with discussion on the consequences of unbalanced work-life living. The purpose of this chapter is to explore the previous studies and establish a gap that exists in the body of knowledge.

2.2 WORK-LIFE BALANCE

The work-life balance concept has been a focus for many employers across the world for the past few decades (Plan, 2019). This was after employers realized the role that work-life balance played in ensuring that employees performed at their optimum levels. Prior to its introduction, managing a balance between work and life was measured to be an employee's issue (Yadav & Rani, 2015). However, rising workloads, globalization and scientifically improvements have made it an issue for all professionals working across all levels and all industries across the world (Yadav & Rani, 2015). The concept received much attention after a significant increase in the number of women joining the workforce across the world. This led to countries such as the United States of America (USA) and the United Kingdom (UK) endorsing legislations aimed at regulating the number of hours that people, particularly women, could work per week (Yadav and Rani, 2015 and Plan, 2019). This increased coverage forced employers to explore ways of balancing women's work and

non-work domains (Yadav & Rani, 2015). Furthermore, Delina and Raya (2013:276) argued that "achieving work-life balance is a necessity for working women to have a good quality of life".

Despite this, previous research revealed that women academics continue to experience a cocktail of challenges in their workplaces (Bothwell, 2018; Muberekwa & Nkomo, 2016; Whaley & Krane, 2012). One such challenge is a lack of support from the high echelons of many tertiary institutions. Authors such as Segal (2010) found that women often lacked support from their institutions in managing their workload. This in turn made it difficult to maintain boundaries between work and non-work domains. In South Africa, Segal (2010) found that women complained that lack of support from their institutions in managing their workload made it difficult to maintain boundaries between work and non-work domains. The issue of lack of support was also highlighted by the country's Department of Education. The Department noted that most universities failed to consider women's role in the family with no systems in place to help them cope with specific circumstances confronting them daily (Department of Education, 2008). Lack of support could be because of a long-held perception held by mostly White academics who often label them as the 'underclass' and 'underperformers' who cannot succeed in academia, let alone become academic leaders (Monnapula-Mapesela, 2017). The consequence is that most of these women remain concentrated in lower-level positions with minimal opportunities for career growth (Department of Education, 2008). This situation is often exacerbated by the fact that Black female academics continue to be undermined, mostly by male counterparts (Maodzwa-Taruvinga & Divala, 2014).

Muberekwa and Nkomo (2016) suggest that the patriarchal nature of the working climate and the gradual change at Universities are a result of these problems and encounters. They also noted that women's gender stereotypes in academia have been compounded by the conservative nature of the larger society in which they reside. For instance, a tendency that women are only good enough to carry administrative duties persists. Present research indicates that female intellectuals appear to be overburdened by heavier teaching loads and extra University service work (Whaley & Krane, 2012). Garnett and Mohamed (2012) espoused that the problem is that administrative activity is frequently overlooked and less glamorous than involvement in study activities. (Garnett & Mahomed 2012).

2.3 WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN THE LABOUR FORCE: A GENERAL OVERVIEW

Over the years the culture of society has suppressed women to stay at home and to keep the houses (Lantara, 2015). This is because the society viewed women as the primary carers of children and other family members Austen and Birch (2000). For many years, women's role in the society was limited to within the boundaries of their respective households. However, this has since changed as many societies gradually realized that women are able to work as good as their male counterparts (Lantara, 2015). This has subsequently led to a significant increase in the number of women joining the workforce across the world according to the International Labour Organizations .

In the United States of America, the Department of Labour shows that there are about 74.6 million women in the civilian labor force. This constitutes almost 47 % of the country's workforce. Furthermore, more than 39 % of women work in occupations where they make up at least three-quarters of the workforce (US Department of Labour, 2019). The figures further reveal that about 70 % of the country's mothers with children under the age of 18 participate in the labor force, of which 75 % are full-time working mothers (US Department of Labour, 2019). In Japan, the country has seen a gradual increase in the number of women participating in the workforce in recent years. In 2015 about 49.6 % of women participated in the workforce. These figures marginally increased to 50.4 % in 2016. The figures increased by about 1 % to about to 51.2 % in 2017 (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2019).

Some of the BRICS nations (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) have also seen an increase, albeit marginally, in the number of women participating in the labour force over the past three years. Firstly, in Brazil the figures stood at 51.1 %, 52.3 % and 53.1 % for the 2015, 2016 and 2017 financial years respectively (OECD, 2019). In India, the country witnessed a significant increase in the number of women with dependents entering the workplace in the 1980s. Recent figures show that about 125 million (33 %) of the country's 380 million working aged women currently participate in the labour force. Although the figures are much lower than the global average of 50 per cent and well below East Asia's average of 63 per cent, this is still considered a

significant number. This increase led to many of the country's companies giving the work-life balance concept serious considerations (Yadav & Rani, 2015).

In South Africa, women, particularly Black women were maltreated with their role being confined to that of childbearing and household duties. However, since the dawn of the new dispensation, the country has put in place measures aimed at transforming women's status and promoting their rights as mandated by the constitution of the country (Muberekwa & Nkomo, 2016). Such measures led to the implementation of policies and strategies intended to create platforms through which women can deconstruct gender while making advancement in the workplace (Ntsele, 2014). As in many countries, the implementation of these strategies has led to a significant increase in the number of women joining the workforce. Recent employment figures reveal that women accounted for 43,8% of total employment in the second quarter of 2018 (Statistics South Africa, 2018). Although the country's labour market continues to be more favourable to men than women, this is a significant increase when compared to the 1997 figures where only 22 % African Black women were employed (STATSSA, 1997).

Other African countries such as Nigeria have also observed an increase in the number of women joining the labour force. According to tThe Global Economy (2019), women participation in Nigeria's workforce increased from 50.33 % in 2016 to 50.43 % in 2017. Statistics further show that countries in the SADC region have also seen an increase in the number of women participations in the labour force. For instance, in Botswana women participation increased from 65.25 % in 2016 to 65.61 % in 2017 (Global Economy, 2019).

The above figures show that women across the world are making an in-roads into labour participation, albeit at a slow pace. However, their participation in the workforce does not exclude them from carrying out their family responsibilities. Women are still expected to perform their duties as mothers and wives. As Lantara (2015) observed, a women's double play today not only has commitments as a housewife at home, but also as a professional woman away from home. These multiple responsibilities make life difficult for women as they must learn to balance the two. Women must therefore, develop an ability to manage the two roles to prevent two-side roles negligence. As Lantara noted, "negligence will bring imbalance when some women frequently

prefer one role and leave the others. If career is preferred, some of them face threat of broken home or worse, i.e. divorce" (Lantara, 2015). It is for this reason that there must be constant studies of this nature in order to generate new ways through which women can effectively play the two roles without jeopardizing any of them.

2.4. WORKING WOMEN AND WORK-LIFE BALANCE

The section focuses on discussing the reciprocity of working women and work life balance with emphasis from past studies.

2.4.1. The origin of work-life balance

The word "work-life balance" was formally coined in 1986, according to Dhas and Karthikeyan (2015), even though its usage in daily language has been used periodically for several years before. This submission is consistent with that of Plan (2019) who found that the concept has been a focus for many employers across the world for the past few decades (Plan, 2019). Its emergence was a consequence of employers' realization of the role that a balanced work-life domain played in ensuring that employees performed at their optimum levels. Prior to its introduction, managing a balance between work and life was measured to be an employee's issues (Yadav & Rani, 2015). However, rising workloads, globalization and scientifically improvements have made it an issue for all professionals working across all levels and all industries across the world (Yadav and Rani, 2015). This led to countries such as the United States of America (USA) and the United Kingdom (UK) endorsing legislations aimed at regulating the number of hours that people, particularly women, could work per week (Yadav & Rani, 2015; Plan, 2019). This was after it was realized that an increased number of women were abandoning the traditional "housewife" role to join the workforce (Yadav & Rani, 2015). It was noted that women were put under immense strain to enter the workforce to build a career as competitive as their male colleagues, while retaining active involvement in personal life at the same time. As a result, the ever-increasing burden on working women took a toll, leaving them less personal time (Delina and Raya, 2013).

2.4.2. Female academics and work-life balance: A world's perspective

Available research findings reveal that female academics, as with many other women in many societies, continue to face daily challenges (Sanders, Willemsen & Millar, 2009; Doherty & Manfredi, 2010). According to Doherty and Manfredi (2010), work and family demands take much of women's time. This leaves them with little time for career advancement. The inability to strike a balance between work and family commitments also leads to poor work performance as noted by Buddhapriya (200). In studying the perceptions of women academics regarding their home-work responsibilities, Naz, Fazal and Khan (2017) found that these women found it difficult to keep balance between their home and workplace responsibilities. They noted that these women faced a range of problems that made it difficult to balance their work and family responsibilities. These problems included lack of support and facilities both at work and at home (Naz *et al.*, 2017) .

2.4.3. Women in Higher Education in SA

In South Africa, the experience of South African Black female academics is directly linked to the country's apartheid past. Prior the dawn of the new dispensation in 1994, individuals were distinguished, advantaged or disadvantaged based on the color of their skin (Mokhele, 2013). Available research findings published over the past two decades reveal that South African Black women academics continue to experience major challenges, more than twenty-four years post the apartheid era (Henry & Glen, 2009; Mokhele, 2013). This is despite the efforts made over the same period to transform the country's higher education (HE) into inclusive system after the apartheid years. For instance, Henry and Glenn (2009) observed that their peers and superiors continue to ostracize black women alike. These findings were later confirmed by Mokhele (2013). In study titled, "Reflections of Black Women Academics at South African Universities: A Narrative Case Study", she found that Black women reported being treated with suspicions by their male white counterparts, questioning anything from their qualifications to their teaching capabilities. It is however, not surprising that some White academics still treat their Black counterparts with contempt (Mokhele, 2013). These forms of behaviour may be related to the age of apartheid. The

government of apartheid-government maintained that statutory recommendations favored white women. This, in fact, put them in the dominant hierarchy of the people of South Africa above Black women (Mokhele, 2013).

According to the Department of Education (2018), racial and gendered inequalities in staff composition in South African Universities is an indication of the structural obstacles that continues to exist for those who have been traditionally marginalized and under-represented within these institutions. It is for this reason that Dominguez-Whitehead and Moosa (2014) observed that "developing a new generation of productive researchers and intellectuals amongst historically marginalized groups who remain underrepresented in academia, is not only a pressing national concern, but also an endeavor taken seriously by Universities that value research production, transformation, and diversity".

2.4.4. Work-life balance and women academics: A South African's perspective

South Africa has seen a significant increase in the number of female academics entering the academia field in recent years. In 2012 statistics, there were about 24 704 women academics working in the country's Universities (Higher Education Information Management System, 2012). The increase in the number of Black female academics in most of the country's Universities also culminated into some being appointed into senior positions previously reserved for male academics. Some of the noticeable appointments include those of Dr. Maphela Ramphele and Prof. Mamokgethi Phakeng as Vice-Chancellors of the University of Cape Town. As with many career women, Black female are confronted with the challenge of trying to strike a balance between their work and non-work domains (Whitehead & Moosa, 2014).

Previous research findings on work-life balance in the South African context in recent years have revealed conflicting results. For instance, Segal (2013) found that women reported that academia provided them with a large degree of flexibility, which was helpful in helping them strike a work-life balance. The issue of flexibility was also noted by Beninger (2010) who argued that unlike

traditional jobs, South African academics were not confined to a 9am – 5pm job settings. This in turn gives them a greater flexibility to juggle between their work and non-work domains. However, these findings contradict those of Segal (2010). In studying the experiences of women academics, women identified lack of support as one of the biggest challenges they face. Women complained that lack of support from their institutions in managing their workload made it difficult to maintain boundaries between work and non-work domains.

2.4.5. Benefits of a balanced work-life living

Available literature reveals several benefits associated with a balanced work-life lifestyle. For instance, Kohll (2018) argues that balancing work and life is a key component of a healthy work environment. His argument stems from the fact that maintaining a work-life balance leads to a reduction in stress level amongst employees. This in turn prevents burnout in the workplace. In addition, Dhas and Karthikeyan (2015) have attributed the following benefits to a balanced work-life living: Firstly, women can effectively manage multiple responsibilities at home, work and in the community without guilt or regret. Secondly, they can work in flexible ways so that earning an income and managing family and other commitments become easier. Thirdly, women become supportive to a workplace that values and trusts staff. This result in a good quality of life as well as an enjoyable work life and career progression (i.e., good health, more money, time to travel and time with friends and family) .

2.5 Consequence of unbalanced work-life living

Research findings on the subject have revealed that unbalanced work-life could lead to serious consequences, not only for the affected employee but for the company as well. Kohll (2018) has identified chronic stress as one of the main consequences of unbalanced work-life living. This could in turn lead to the manifestations of physical ailments (e.g. hypertension, chronic aches and heart problems) and mental problems (e.g. depression, anxiety and insomnia). It has also been found that a prolonged stress could lead to workplace burnout. This could in turn lead to fatigue, mood swings, irritability and a decrease in work performance (Kohll, 2018). As indicated earlier,

stress not only affect the affected individual, but their employers as well. For instance, the Harvard Business Review outlines that the physical and psychological problems associated with burned-out employees cost the USA an estimated $125 billion to $190 billion a year in healthcare spending (Garton, 2017).

2.6 Synthesis of literature review

The review of literature has revealed several issues regarding the subject under investigation. Firstly, the literature has revealed that women across the world continue to abandon the "housewife" label and are joining the workforce in large numbers. Secondly, the review reveals contradicting findings with regard to experiences of female academics on the issue of work-life balance. While others found that women academics are able to balance their work and non-work domains, other findings show that female academics struggle to cope. Lack of support, increased workload and the need to publish have been identified as the main causes of these imbalances. The literature further revealed both the benefits of work-life balance as well as the consequences of not balancing the two. Lastly, literature gap identified from the reviewed literature review is that little is being said about the strengths and weaknesses of the strategies currently used by Universities to enhance Black female academics' work-life balance. This study will aim to close this gap.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter highlighted the in depth understanding of work life balance among women academics in institutions of higher education. The literature review guided the formulation of the theoretical framework, research problem, and the formulation of the research objectives. The chapter also reviewed the literature on the actual and potential consequences of an unbalanced work life living. The subsequent chapter discusses the methodology that guided this study .

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter analysed the literature and established a conceptual model to address the research query. The method used to address research questions is outlined in this chapter. It starts with a discourse on the research methodology and design chosen. The next segment addresses the sampling frame and the units of analysis. Procedures and instruments are adopted is this study are also discussed. The chapter ends with the ethical considerations that were followed by the researcher.

3.2 Research approach and design

The primary aim of this study was to explore personal experiences of Black female academics working at a University in Gauteng. A qualitative research approach was followed in this study. Creswell et al. (2009) concluded that qualitative research is a study that sought to gather comprehensive evidence in relation to a given phenomenon or to establish and comprehend what has been found with awareness. Durrheim (1999) described qualitative research as a means of gathering information in the form of written or spoken language or in the form of observation, by defining and classifying patterns, recorded in a particular language and analyzing the data. The qualitative research approach was used to gain in-depth information and deep understating of what Black female academics at a university perceive to be challenges confronting them in their effort to strike a work-life balance. It allowed the researcher to ask questions that could not be easily put into numbers to understand the experiences of Black female academics. The downside to qualitative research is that this approach is time-consuming. The second possible concern with qualitative analysis is that a complex issue could go overlooked (Bowen 2006). Through the adoption of the qualitative approach, the researcher managed to comprehensively understand the views of the Black female academics. The interpretations of scholars, however, are constrained. The findings and assumptions related to the issue of study are influenced by personal experience and expertise, which may be subjective rather than objective. Nonetheless, the researcher deems

qualitative research as suitable for this research as he was seeking to gain comprehensive insight on the experiences of respondents on the subject under investigation .

An exploratory case study approach was adopted (Ivankova, Creswell & Stick, 2006). The study was exploratory in nature because currently, little is known about the experiences of Black female academics working at a university regarding the work-life balance concept. Moreover, little is known about the implications of the concept regarding occupational social work and household structures for economic and other well-being outcomes. The researcher used qualitative research methodology. Research design is defined as the overarching plan preferred by the researcher to combine the various elements of the research coherently and logically (De Vos, 2002). Qualitative approach was a wide-ranging approach to researching social dynamics. The technique was naturalistic and interpretive, relying on various forensic approaches. It was conducted in natural settings rather than in controlled ones. It assumes that humans use what they see, hear, and feel to make meaning of social phenomena, and it relies on a variety of data-gathering techniques. It is research that represents human beings as whole persons living in dynamic and complex social arrangements (Rodgers, 2000).

3.3 Population, sample and Sampling procedures

3.3.1. Population

Babbie (2011) defines population as the "the subjects that will be the focus point to draw conclusions". On the other hand, Creswell (2009) defines population as the entire group that the researcher considered for the research. The available statistics revealed that the University currently has about 93 Black female academics in its employ. The population for this study comprised of Black female academics currently working at a University in Gauteng. They occupy different academic positions in all schools of the University.

3.3.2. Sample and sampling methods

The researcher adopted purposive sampling in selecting respondents to take part in the research. A sample refers to a smaller choice of people from the community (Neuman, 2011). Purposive sampling is a procedure in which the researcher deliberately picks participants based on attributes they have (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2016). Purposive sampling method was used to select respondents to participate in the study. A sample refers to a smaller selection of individuals from the population (Neuman, 2011). Purposive sampling is a method where the researcher makes a deliberate choice of a participant due to the qualities that he/she possesses (Etikan *et al.*, 2016). The advantage associated with purposive sampling is that the researcher deliberately selects into the study, a sample that is guaranteed to provide relevant information to answer the research questions (Maxwell, 1997). However, it has also been found that purposive sampling can be highly prone to researcher bias (Sharma, 2017). The researcher aims to mitigates his biasness by adhering to the identified criteria. The identified respondents must be Black females working as academics at a University in Gauteng. For this study, Black female academics were intentionally selected to participate in the study due to the qualities they possess. The following inclusion criteria was used in the selection of the sample. Firstly, the candidate must be Black female academic currently working at a University in Gauteng. Secondly, to be included in the sample, the individuals have been in the employ of the University for a minimum of three years. Thirdly, the individuals were either working as a lecturer or occupying a senior position within the academic division (i.e. Head of department or a dean). The researcher identified this group to possess the relevant information needed to answer the research questions and achieve the objectives of the study.

3.3.3. Sampling size

For this study, the researcher selected 10 respondents to form part of the study. The following table shows the breakdown of the sampling procedures of this study.

Table 3 1. A summary of the sampling procedures (N=10)

Demographic factor	Sub-category	No.
School	Number of Schools	5
Name of school		
	Medicine	2
	Pharmacy	2
	Health care Sciences	2
	Health care Medicine	2
	Oral Health Sciences	2
Designation	Lecturer	5
	Senior lecturer	5

3.4 Research instruments

A semi structured interview guide was used to collect the necessary data needed for analysis (Appendix 1). The guide contained a list of questions that the researcher used and it was designed prior to the researcher started with the data collection process. The structured interview guide was piloted tested with three respondents to establish the validity of the instrument.

3.5. Data Collection

The primary aim of this study was to explore personal experiences of black female academics working at a University in Gauteng. Cohen, Manion and Marrison (2000) characterize data collection as a method of systematically collecting information to establish answers to the issue of research. Data can be collected using different tools, which depend on the nature of the research. Data collection tools refer to methods used for gathering the data required for analysis (De Vos,

2002). Interviews, observation, focus group conversations (qualitative) and questionnaire surveys are the most common methods for data collection (quantitative). In this research, semi-structured interviews were used in this study to obtain the requisite data from the respondents. Semi-structured interviews refer to interviews in which the respondents have answered the predetermined open-ended questions (Jamshed, 2014). For this study, a semi-structured interview guide designed before the interviews commence (appendix 3). The guide contained a list of questions aimed at eliciting answers from respondents on their experiences as Black female academics and it was pilot tested with three respondents before the interviews were conducted. The relevance of this method to this study was that it allowed the researcher to gain an in-depth insight on personal experiences of the respondents. This assertion was consistent with Creswell's observation that the method allows for a deeper probing on issues using open-ended questions (Creswell, 2009). One of the disadvantages of semi-structured interviews was that it is time-consuming, expensive and resource intensive (Hardon, Hodgkin & Fresle, 2004). The following strategy was used to mitigate against this drawback. The study sample was limited to 10 respondents. Secondly, interviews conducted at the University premises to minimize transport costs .

3.5.1. Interview process

The researcher secured appointments with respondents, to be done either through telephonic and/or email correspondences for the date of the interviews. This was done to ensure that the respondents are aware of the researcher's pending visit so that they can adequately prepare themselves. Making appointments further afforded respondents an opportunity to choose the venue and time convenient to them. On the day of the interview, the researcher first explained the purpose of the study to the respondent. Respondents were then afforded the opportunity to ask questions on any issue relating to their participation in the study. This process was necessary as it allowed respondents to make an informed decision on whether to participate in the study or not (ethical considerations are discussed in detail under ethical considerations heading). Respondents were then required to give consent to being interviewed by signing a consent form (Appendix 5). Interviews were conducted in English. Each interview lasted between 20 and 45 minutes. However, interviews are associated

with several disadvantages that might hinder the data collection process. One such disadvantage is that respondents might refuse to have their interviews digitally recorded (Hardon, Hodgkin & Fresle, 2004). This might in turn compromise the quality of the data to be collected. An assurance was given to respondents that recordings will only be used for academic purposes and will not be used against them in any way. Furthermore, respondents were informed that their names will not be mentioned in the tape recordings. Instead, pseudo names will be used for the purposes of data analysis. However, in the event where a respondent fills uncomfortable having the interview tape recorded even after all the assurances, the researcher should resort to note-taking to capture what the respondent was saying (Muswazi & Nhamo, 2013). In this study all the respondents agreed with tape recording.

3.6. Data analysis

The primary aim of this study was to explore personal experiences of Black female academics working at a University in Gauteng. Mrinde (2014) defines data analysis as "a process of synthesizing data, searching for patterns, discovering what is important as well as what is to be learned and deciding what to tell others". The author further argues that data analysis is necessary because it "enables the researcher to summarize, categorize and organize the collected data in such a way that it is possible to adequately answer the research questions". In both qualitative and quantitative studies, particular methods of data analysis are undertaken. Data analysis of qualitative studies is carried out to draw conclusions and guidelines relevant to a research question. In this respect, Terre Blanche and Durrheim (2006) shows that analysis includes constantly reading through data and engagement in data break down and building it up again in a new way. This is known as expounding and interpretation.

In this study, Thematic Content Analysis was used in a seven-step method suggested by Creswell (2009) to interpret the collected data using thematic codes and concepts (Figure 3.1). The first phase consisted of the researcher planning the information for review. The procedure involved in transcribing and encoding the audio-tape data. During this stage the researcher transcribed all the collected data using Microsoft word.

The second stage included reading the text by the researcher and highlighting issues of interest that resulted from data as indicated by Creswell (2009). Then the researcher read and re - read in their essence and carefully. As they came to mind, certain thoughts were jotted down. Transcripts were then put in such a way that at the top of the pile were those that are interesting and short. The researcher then picked one transcript at a time and examined it. The researcher posed questions during the analysis of the transcripts that shed light on the underlying interpretations of the given results. In this step, he noted items such as understanding of work life balance, personal and work-related challenges. By sorting the emerging objects into themes, the steps below were adhered to. Step number four included discussing key concepts. Themes are key data trends resulting from the analysis that contribute to the objectives the research sought to resolve (Braun, 2006). This was followed by step 5, which involved re-evaluating text for specific data events per theme. The researcher was interested in the creation of the final form of each theme in step six. Finally, to better communicate the context, the researcher recorded the effects of each theme and retrieved quotes from the original text (Figure 3.1). It made it easier to draw rational assumptions from the interview questions and what is distilled from the literature review, as the researcher became more familiar with the results.

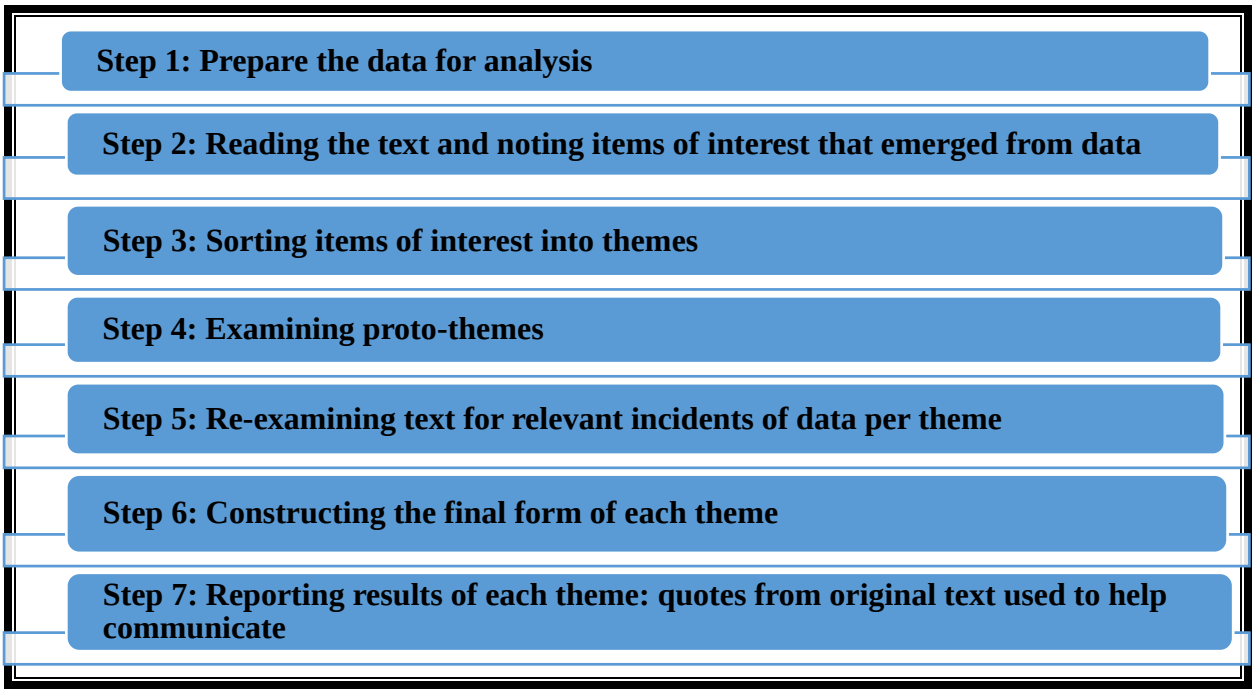


Figure 3 1: Step- by- step approach used to analyse data using thematic content analysis

Source: Creswell (2009)

3.7. Trustworthiness of the study

It consists by establishing these four things: credibility, transferability, confirmability, dependability. The credibility is the safety of the qualitative researcher in the truth of the results of the research study. Member-checking was used to establish the credibility of the study findings. This was achieved by sharing the results with respondents. Sharing the findings with respondents afforded them an opportunity to clarify their initial intentions, correct errors that might have occurred and provide additional information where necessary (Lani, 2019). Transferability is the way in which the qualitative researcher demonstrates that the results of the research study are applicable to other contexts. The researcher would be unable to determine the tranferability of the study. This is because only readers of the research can make such a determination (Barnes, Conrad, Demont-Heinrich, Graziano, Kowalski *et al.,* 1994). However, the researcher presented the findings in a way that readers enabled to make connections between elements of a study and their own experience (Barnes, *et al.,* 1994) .

Confirmability refers to a degree to which the results of the study could be confirmed or corroborated by other people (Trochim, 2006). Through the data audit, the researcher was able to constantly examine the data collection and analysis procedures used. Such an examination helped the researcher make judgements about the potential for bias and/or distortions (Trochin, 2006) .

Dependability is the extent to which the study could be repeated by other researchers and the results would be consistent. In the context of this study to ensure all of the above the researcher made sure to avoid vague and ambiguous questions, and questions directing participants to answer in a certain way (Trochin, 2006). The conduct of face to face interviews aided in ensuring in seeking clarification and further interogation when there is need to do so.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

The following main ethical issues were addressed in this study:

3.8.1. Ethical clearance

Ethical clearance is imperative in research as it provide the basis for ensuring that the research to be conducted is ethically sound and ensure that all ethical issues are being adhered to. The initial stage was seeking permission from the Departmental and Faculty Research Ethics Committee at the University of the Witwatersrand. Once permission was granted, the researcher contacted the University in Gauteng to obtain permission to approach the Black female academics. The researcher consulted with all the schools of the University, i.e, School of medicine, Pharmacy, Health care sciences, Health care medicine and oral health sciences) to access the Black female academics. A convenient time and place were organized for interviews.

3.8.2. Informed consent and voluntary participation

Upon securing permission from the University, the researcher moved on to securing consent from sampled respondents. According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2000), it is the responsibility of the researcher to explain as fully as possible, and in terms meaningful to the respondents about the nature of the study. He/She should also explain the aim and nature of the research, who is undertaking it, who is funding it, its likely duration, why it is being undertaken, the possible consequence of the research, and how the results are to be disseminated. The researcher emphasized that they could participate voluntarily and that they were free to withdraw any time they wanted. Respondents were requested to sign an informed consent as an indication that they consent to participate in the study and that they were doing so voluntarily (Appendix 2). The signing of the consent form further indicated that the purpose of the study was explained to them and that they were allowed to ask clarity seeking questions before the commencement of the interviews. Respondents were also required to sign the consent to give the researcher permission to digitally record the interviews.

3.8.3. Privacy, confidentiality and no harm

According to Ritchie and Lewis (2003), confidentiality means "avoiding the attribution of comments, in reports or presentations, to identified participants" while anonymity means "the identity of those taking part not being known outside the research team". For this study confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents was guaranteed throughout the study project. This was achieved through the following. Firstly, by maintaining that both direct recognition (comments related to a name or a particular function of respondents) and indirect recognition (reference to a list of attributes that may help distinguish respondents) were avoided and the researcher retained the anonymity of the respondents. Secondly, He ensured that the anonymity of participants was maintained through using pseudo names instead of their actual names to describe them. Thirdly, both the interviews and the questionnaire survey omitted details that may make the name of the respondents recognizable. This contained physical and postal addresses and the respondents' telephone numbers. Before the start of the interview, this detail was clarified to the respondents.

In this study, the researcher put measures in place to ensure that the respondents are protected from any harm, be it emotional, physical or psychological harm. The following measures were put in place to ensure that the respondents are not harmed by virtue of their participation in the study. Careful consideration was made while designing the questions for both the interviews and surveys. This included avoiding asking questions with sexual connotations and avoiding language that others may consider too explicit. If need arises, respondents had an opportunity to access counselling services for psychological distress free of charge from the local Psychologist.

3.9 Limitations of the study

The following limitations have been identified for the proposed study:

Sample size - Firstly, the size of the sample (10 respondents) of this study was small and only focuses on one institution. Consequently, its findings cannot be deemed representative of Black female academics working at the country's institutions of higher learning.

Timing of the study - Secondly, the study's target sample comprised of people who are always committed. This means the researcher find it difficult to secure appointments for interviews.

Researcher's lack of experience – The researcher's lack of prior practical experience in that collection processes might compromise the quality of data to be collected.

Data collection tools – The researcher used a digital audio recorder to record the interviews with respondents. However, possibilities exist that some respondents might not feel comfortable having conversations about their personal experiences captured on a digital recorder.

Gender of the researcher – Women Respondents might find it difficult to openly share their personal experiences to a male researcher as compared to talking to another woman.

3.10 Conclusion

A detailed explanation of how the data was gathered, arranged and analyzed was given in the methodology section. Since an inadequate research design may lead to erroneous or inaccurate results and assumptions, it is an essential component of the whole research. To clearly illustrate the procedures used to select the respondents from the study demographic, the population and sampling methods were explained in detail. The process of data collection, including the methodology used for this purpose, and also the process of data analysis has been defined in depth, since it is from the analysis that is possible to draw concrete conclusions and suggestions for future research as well as for those in both the sample and the research population. The outcomes that resulted from the data analysis are presented in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS OF THE STUDY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The chapter presents, discuss and analyses the findings from the study on the experiences of Black female academics at a university in Gauteng, using thematic analysis to achieve the research objectives. Specifically, this chapter presents demographic information; experiences regarding work life balance, factors that hinder work life as perceived by Black female academics, and strategies for ensuring work life balance. It further sets out ideal strategies for a work life balance for Black female academics.

The following is a table with the demographic details of respondents.

Table 4 1. Profile of respondents (N=10)

Demographic factor	Sub-category	No.
Gender of participant	Female	10
Age of participants		
	31 to 35 years	2
	36 to 40 years	1
	41 to 45 years	2
	46 to 50 years	3
	51 to 55 years	2
Qualification	Masters	7
	PHD	3

The study consisted of ten (10) respondents whose age ranged from 31 to 51 years of age (Table 4.1). Seven respondents who had master's degree as an educational qualification, three of them

were youth. Six of the respondents were middle aged between 36 and 50 years. Three respondents had a PhD qualification. Five of the respondents held a senior lecturing or a junior lecturing position.

For ethical considerations, pseudo-names were used in presenting the responses from the respondents. Thus, names used in this report are pen names and do not reflect or exhibit the real respondents' character in any form or another and any similarity to any person would be purely coincidental.

4.2 Home challenges confronting Black female academics

Women are expected to execute particular duties as dictated to them by societal and cultural expectations. The aim of this chapter is to present the findings of this study regarding the experiences of Black female academics as perceived by the respondents.

Family responsibilities have been identified as the main challenge confronting Black female academics. Majority (9) of respondents have indicated that one of the main challenges confronting them as Black female academics are the family duties they are expected to carry out as wives and mothers in their families. Respondents stated that the additional family responsibilities that they are expected to perform as wives and mothers put an additional burden to them as Black female academics. Following are excerpts from some of the respondents regarding family responsibilities:

> *The academic world is a very difficult for the Black female academics because after work we [Respondents] are expected to perform motherly and wife duties at home such as looking after the children, cooking and doing house chores. They [Respondents] should also cook for their husbands and that is a big challenge [Sibongile, aged 45, Senior Lecturer]*

In the above quote, Sibongile highlights the challenge that Black female academics face with regard to the household duties that they are expected to perform as both mothers and wives.

Sibongile's views were shared by majority (6) of respondents. These respondents noted that having to perform their house duties while at the same time having to carry out their work duties had a negative impact on their work performance. They based their argument on the fact that they are mostly forced to take their work home such as marking of scripts, preparing for lectures and writing articles for publications. However, family responsibilities such as cooking and helping the children with their homework meant they had no time to continue with their work. Participants' views are consistent with findings of earlier studies (Department of Higher Education and Training: DHET, 2019). Ntsele (2014) who found that working in academia had a negative impact on women's ability to carry out their household duties. These findings were later supported by Mahasha (2016), who found that apart from their demanding work, Black African professional women are expected to take care of their family responsibilities such as childcare and taking care of the house. However, this becomes a tedious task to complete with many struggling to balance work and family roles due to the nature of their work (Mahasha, 2016). The Department of Higher Education and Training attribute these findings to a patriarchal society. In its report titled, "Report of the Ministerial Task Team on the Recruitment, Retention and Progression of Black South African Academics, the department noted that the country's largely patriarchal society meant family responsibilities such as caregiving and homemaking continue to be done mostly by women (DHET, 2019). Mahasha's findings are consistent with the findings of this study. Findings of this study have further revealed that financial constrains also contributed to some of the challenges confronting Black female academics. Majority (7) of the participants revealed that after work, they are forced to perform household duties and to look after the extended family members. The following excerpt from an interview with Ruth put this issue into perspective:

> *As Black academics, we do not have the luxury of being wealthy and we have to look after the extended family with the available limited income. This in turn affects our disposable income as we have more people to feed [Ruth, aged 48, Senior Lecturer]*.

Ruth's quote is a representative of what many Black African professionals experience in different institutions of higher education. The obligation that many women have of taking care of their extended families often stretches their monthly salaries to the limit. This in turn leaves them with

no disposable income. In South Africa, there is a growing mismatch between financial income and spending in most families. The situation is worse in Black communities with extended families. This is also, referred to as "Black Tax". Mangoma and Wilson-Prangley, (2019) narrates that, this phenomenon has crippled many families. It is a form of family support where financial transfers are substantive to members of the extended family to cater for general expenditure including in education. Ordinarily, this form of burden affects both men and women.

The situation is further exacerbated by the fact that in some cases Black female academics are expected to financially provide for their extended family members. The findings of this study reveals that some of the respondents are expected to provide not only for their immediate family members, but also for their extended family members. While it is considered noble to take care of one's extended family, particularly in the African culture, such often places a huge financial burden on Black females in general and academics as evidenced by findings of the study. Extended financial sacrifices in assistance of family members erode their disposable income as well as the saving ability. A typical example of the pressure that Black female academics find themselves in could be seen in the following quotes from two respondents respectively:

My in-laws think I am very rich and as a result, everyone always wants money from me, which I do not have. What they do not know is that I always use credit cards and they do not believe that I do not have money [Julia, aged 53, Lecturer]

And

As Blacks, we do not have the luxury of being wealthy and we must look after the extended family with the available limited income. This in turn affects our disposable income as we have more people to feed [Ruth, aged 48, Senior Lecturer].

There is a growing mismatch between financial income and spending in most families. The situation is worse in Black communities with extended families. In the future, more women are likely to be in this financial strain. Most of these women's situation is further intensified by existing cultural practices that require them to carry out certain household duties. Some of the respondents indicated that they continue to perform some duties such as cooking for their

husbands. (Mangolothi, 2019). The following quote provides a clear picture on how cultural beliefs have impact on Black African academics:

In our African culture, I am still expected to perform all my wifely duties whilst I have a helper to assist me. This is the challenge that compromise my work as academic, for example I am struggling to finish my PhD because of the family responsibilities [Lyn, aged 45, Lecturer].

The above quote clearly demonstrates how some cultural practices negatively affect Black African academics' work performance. These practices continue to influence how women act, mainly because of how Black women's socialization and upbringing which taught them to perform these duties (Muberekwa and Nkomo (2016). In exploring the perceptions of Wits academic women about women empowerment and the changing roles of women in 21st-Century South Africa, Muberekwa and Nkomo found that Black women felt obliged to execute certain household duties mainly because of the existing belief that such roles are their social duty. However, such beliefs often result in Black female academics sacrificing their own academic development. The extent to which some women are willing to sacrifice their own professional development for the sake of their families could be seen from the following quote.

> *Some of the professional development programmes are conducted in the evenings but because we have to cook, as we do not believe that helpers should be cooking for our husbands, I do not attend those programs [Cindy, aged 31, Lecturer]*

The above quote clearly denotes how some cultural practices continue to have a negative impact on women's professional development. Cultural practices mean Black female academics are often forced to abandon their own goals and aspirations in order to carry out their wifely and motherly duties as expected by both their culture and the society. However, such socially influenced duties often lead to a conflict between Black female academics' professional work and family roles. The extent of such conflicts, could be seen in the following extract by Julia who says,

> *My workload means I am unable to attend some of the family gatherings. As a result, some of my in-laws think I am arrogant and I do not attend family gatherings*

because I am filthy rich since I am a Doctor and this hurts me a lot [Julia, aged 53, Lecturer].

In the above quote, Julia laments about how her work pressures prevent her to attend family functions. The issue of conflicts within the family system is consistent with findings by Kelly, 2008. Black female academics from the working class found themselves torn between meeting their cultural obligations (i.e. performing household duties) and fitting into the world of academia. Such conflicts often lead to these women forsaking some aspects of self and compromising their independent desires and choices in order to accommodate their cultural obligations (Hunt, 2006). However, such sacrifices often result in these women limiting their own imagination and intelligence.

The findings of this study further outline the patriarchal and cultural practices that continued to influence how women are viewed within the household setup (Mudau and Obadire, 2017). Most of the respondents complained about their families' insistence on them performing certain duties as dictated by their respective cultures. In most Black cultures, women are expected to play an active role in functions such as funerals and family ceremonies. Findings of this study reveal that these activities are mostly done during weekends. The fact that they are often conducted during weekends create conflicts between respondents' cultural obligations and their academic work. Majority of respondents revealed that they often used the weekends to do the work they could not do during the week such as marking, assessments and writing their articles. However, this often becomes difficult to execute as they are sometimes expected to perform their family's cultural duties. The dynamics of being Black female academic in South Africa as articulated above could be the reason why Black female academics continue to constitute a small fraction of active scientists. A recent study by Joubert and Guenther (2017) reveals that Black women constituted only 17 % of the country's academics who are classified as active scientists as compared to 78% of White academics. Additional family and cultural obligations that Black female academics are expected to execute means; they have limited time in which to carry out research studies necessary for them to publish articles.

4.3 Work-related challenges confronting black female academics.

This section presents the findings on the work-related challenges confronting Black female academics as experienced by the respondents. The challenges include lack of support from supervisors; Patriarchal tendencies (Lack of respect from male colleagues); lack of recognition from the institution and workload.

The below information presents the work challenges experienced by Black female academics as perceived by participants. Lack of support from supervisors have been identified as the main challenge confronting Black female academics. Seven (7) respondents have identified it as one of the work-related problems they face. These respondents stated that lack of support from their predominantly male supervisors made their work difficult. The picture that emerged from the findings is of male supervisors who are not willing to offer their female junior colleagues the necessary support they need to develop their career. The following excerpt provides a clear picture of what Black female academics endured in the hands of their male colleagues:

> *At work, line managers do not offer us the necessary support we need. They do not understand that when we get home, we need to attend to our family matters. They always put women under pressure to deliver without considering the fact that we have families to take care of. The consequence of working under severe pressure is often poor results. My view is that line managers should be compassionate and be supportive to female academics, particularly Black female academics (Ruth, aged 48, Senior Lecturer)*

In the above quote, Ruth shows her frustrations with the lack of support that Black female academics often experience at the hands of their supervisors. Ruth's views are consistent with those of other respondents who indicates that they were not receiving adequate support from the supervisors, particularly male supervisors. There was a consensus amongst majority of the respondents that their male supervisors were not sympathetic to Black female academics in terms of work-load management. These findings seem to validate the findings of earlier studies (Department of Education, 2008). Segal (2010) found that women often lacked support from their

institutions in managing their workload. This in turn made it difficult to maintain boundaries between work and non-work domains. On the other hand, the Department noted that most Universities failed to consider women's role in the family with no systems in place to help them cope with specific circumstances confronting them on a daily basis (Department of Education, 2008). Respondents further noted that lack of support from their male supervisors often compromise the quality of work that they produce. This is mainly because lack of support from their institutions in managing their workload often makes it difficult for them to maintain boundaries between work and non-work domains. As Pinkie noted, supervisors do not seem to comprehend the fact that in addition to being academics, Black female academics have families to take care off when they knock off from work. Lack of support could be as a consequence of a long-held perception held by mostly White academics who often label them as the 'underclass' and 'underperformers' who cannot succeed in academia, let alone become academic leaders (Monnapula-Mapesela, 2017).

Patriarchal tendencies were also identified as the main problems confronting Black female academics. Five (5) respondents indicated that they felt belittled and being looked down upon by their male colleagues solely because of their gender. Respondents' experiences show that Black female academics' professionalism and ability to do work is subjected to high scrutiny and criticism in higher education unlike for men academics. The following quote from Cindy provides an example of what Black female academics go through in the hands of their senior male colleagues:

> *At work its difficult to work with Black males because they do not respect you. You are primarily seen as a person who should be at home taking care of the family, so as female you must work extra hard to be recognized. For example, a Black female who has a PhD and publish a lot will not be promoted very fast as compared to a male who can be promoted to be a professor without enough or many publications' challenge [Cindy, aged 31, Lecturer*]

Through the above quote Cindy describe the experiences that Black female academics go through in their engagements with their male counterparts. It is clear through this quote that Black female

academics are not accorded the same respect given to male academics. Furthermore, women are forced to work twice as much as their male counterparts to receive the same recognition. The fact that patriarchal practices have been identified as one of the main challenges confronting Black female academics is hardly surprising. South Africa remains largely a patriarchal society where women continue to experience inequalities. Available literature shows that patriarchal practices are not only limited to communities and that patriarchy is still much alive in the workplace as well, including those in academia (Muberekwa & Nkomo, 2016). Muberekwa and Nkomo (2016) stated that these challenges and experiences are a consequence of the patriarchal nature of the workplace environment and the slow transformation at Universities. Black female academics working within the country's higher education system continue to fall victim of patriarchal institutional policies that continue to exist in many of the country's Universities (Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), 2019). The challenge with many of these policies is that they neglect to take into account the broader social inequalities relating to gender identity and gender roles that still prevail in South African society (DHET, 2019).

Cindy's observation further confirms the position of the intersectional theory that posits that, undermining and oppression of women in a society today remains deeply race and gender based. This could be caused by the dominant widely held patriarchal societal norms in the society making their way into the workplace as observed by Moraga, Cherrie, Anzaldua and Gloria (2015). Traditionally, women are presumed to be fragile and incapable of performing their duties like their male counterparts. Despite their serious commitment to work, women remain vulnerable to both men and other women for their career growth. The challenge with patriarchal culture in higher education often marginalizes Black women and other women of colour, resulting in the feeling of invisibleness (Mokhele, 2013). The existence of a patriarchal culture could also explain the reason for Black female academics' lack of recognition. The findings of this study reveal that more than half (6) of the respondents identified lack of recognition by the University as one of the challenges confronting Black female academics. During an interview with Sibongile (45), She made the following statement:

> *The society looks down on Black female academics. As a female academic you need to work twice as hard to get the same recognition that male academics receive (Sibongile,45, Senior Lecturer)*

The above quote provides a picture in respect of the difficulties that Black female academics face to receive recognitions due to them. Women are required to work twice as much as their male colleagues to earn the same recognition. It is however important this situation is not confined to South African Universities only. Available literature shows that women of colour continue to receive a row deal even in Universities based in developed countries. For instance, a 2015 report by Equality Challenge Unit on the subject revealed that women of colour in academia felt they had to work harder to prove their worth, were less likely to apply for promotion, and were less likely to succeed even in cases where they submit applications for promotion (Equality Challenge Unit, 2015). It is therefore safe to infer that patriarchal culture in the higher education system continues to hamper the academic development of Black female academics.

The table further identified work overload as another challenge confronting Black female academics. About 4 respondents have reported having heavier workloads. These findings are consistent with those of Naicker (2014). In a study titled, "The journey of South African women academics with a particular focus on women academics in theological education", Naicker outlined those respondents reported heavier teaching loads than their other colleagues, with some junior faculty having a double teaching schedule every day. Increased workloads often leave women with limited time to participate in academic development programmes such as, article publications and attending seminars. The following quote from Lindiwe (52) give a clear picture of what Black female academics go through during the course of their working day:

> *I am expected to do a lot of things at work and I often do not have time to complete everything. As a result, I normally finish my daily work at 6pm or even 8pm. Like I said I want to be promoted so I have to work overtime for me to publish articles. I am forced to work overtime because it is difficult to do it during the normal working hours because of my busy working schedule. For instance, three weeks ago I*

received comments from reviewers, but I haven't had time to work on them. This is in turn affecting my prospects of being promoted [Lindiwe, 52, Senior Lecturer]

The above quote from Lindiwe clearly displays how an increased workload often affects Black female academics' professional development aspirations. They struggle to juggle between fulfilling their work obligations and professional development. An increased workload means these women do not have time to participate in career development initiatives such as article publications. As Lindiwe noted, the challenge is on articles publication and this is a key requirement for promotion. This phenomenon is called publish or perish. Publish or perish is defined as the pressure that academics have to publish articles in order to progress in their academic career such as securing a promotion (Rawat & Meena, 2014). This is mainly because academia article publication and student research supervision are seen as two most powerful methods that academics have to demonstrate academic acumen to peers (Rawat & Meena, 2014). Consequently, scholars who do not frequently publish may lose out on promotional positions (Rawat & Meena, 2014).

Increased workloads mean Black female academics will always struggle to publish articles on a regular basis as compared to their male counterparts. These findings are consistent with earlier findings showing that Black female academics have less discretionary time to conduct research, publish and present papers as they struggle to balance their professional and family commitments (Pillay, 2009; Magano, 2011). Others might argue that male academics also have the same workloads as Black female academics, but they still publish on a regular basis. While this might be true, it is important to note that in addition to their workloads, women are also expected to fulfill their household duties as shown earlier. This leaves them with limited time in which to dedicate for article publication. These dynamics mean Black female academics will always lag behind their male counterparts in terms of article publication and Black female academics will always miss out on promotional positions. Therefore, there is a great need for support programmes geared at assisting Black female academics to manage their workloads and article publications. Such initiatives will level the playing field and ensure that Black female academics have equal opportunities as their White female and male counterparts for promotion.

4.4 Work-life balance

This section provides findings on respondents' ability to strike a balance between their work and personal lives. The section starts with findings of respondents' understanding of the work-life balance concept. It was important to obtain respondents' understanding of the concept first before dwelling into their work and personal experiences. The following information presents respondents' views on the meaning of the concept.

All respondents (10) perceived the concept "work-life balance" to refer to a person's ability to strike a balance between work and personal life obligations, ensuring that either one does not suffer as a result of the other. Following are excerpts from some respondents on their understanding of the concepts:

> *Work-life balance means being able to manage time and your work schedule and making sure it does not interfere with your personal life. It means striking a balance between work and family [Cindy, aged 31, Lecturer]*
>
> *Work-life balance means being successful at work and at home and balancing work with family, not neglecting any of the two and giving more time to the other one.* [*Ruth, aged 48, Senior Lecturer]*

The above quotes from the two respondents, shows that respondents understand the concept of work life balance. They refer to one's ability to can strike a healthy balance between their work and personal lives. Respondents' understanding of the concept is consistent with earlier descriptions (Clarke, 2000 and Dhas, 2015). Clarke (2000) defines work life balance as the level of satisfaction and the connection amongst the several roles in the life of a person. Work-life balance is "about creating and maintaining supportive and healthy work environments, which will enable employees to have balance between work and personal responsibilities and thus strengthen employee loyalty and productivity (Dhas,2015). The above findings are a clear indication that respondents who took part in this study understood what a work-life balance mean.

4.4.1 Striking a work-life balance

The findings of the study divulge that respondents' marital status played a major role in their ability to strike a balance between work and personal life. Eight (8) married respondents reported that they are finding it difficult to strike a work-life balance. On the other hand, the remaining 2 unmarried respondents reported finding it easy to strike a balance between their work and personal lives. Following are excerpts from both unmarried and married respondents:

> *I am still new into the academic world and as a result I haven't experienced a lot of pressure that other female lecturers are experiencing, particularly those in senior positions. I do not experience many challenges because I am single and my daughter is married. I am, therefore, able to strike a balance between my work and family life (Sibongile, 45, Senior Lecturer).*

The above quote from Sibongile shows that Black female academics with limited family obligations are able to strike a balance between work and personal life. On the contrary, the following quote from a married Sibongile shows how married Black female academics with family commitments often struggle to strike a balance between their work commitments and personal lives:

> *I am not able to strike a balance between the two. It is very difficult to manage with a younger child. My daughter is twelve years old, so she needs guidance at home. When I get home, I have to make sure that she has done her homework while at the same time I have to start cooking. After that, I still have to do the dishes and then start preparing for lectures for the following day. Therefore, I do not think I am balancing the two or coping. I think I almost came to a point of breaking down (Sibongile, 45, Senior lecturer).*

The above quote from Sibongile provides a clear picture of the struggles that married Black female academics go through in trying to strike a balance between work and personal life. The findings of this study disclose that married Black female academics find it difficult to strike a balance between work and personal lives when compared to their unmarried counterparts. Unlike

unmarried respondents with limited family obligations, married women are expected to perform household duties when they arrive home from work. These include preparing meals for their families, helping their children with homework and preparing them for bed. In addition to performing household chores, many also had to assess students' tasks and prepare for the following day's lessons. The situation means that many of these women stay awake until early hours of the morning. Most of these women's situation is compounded by the fact that they are unable to afford to enlist the services of a helper. One can therefore deduce from the above findings that Black female academics with family commitments find it difficult to strike a work-life balance. These demands together with the need to meet their work commitments while at the same time striving for professional achievements such as article publications placed an extra burden on these women, leading them in struggling to balance their work and private lives.

4.4.2 Forces responsible for maintaining and furthering work-life balance

This section presents the study findings regarding the strategies that participants employ in their personal lives to maintain work-life balance. The findings of this study have identified church service as the main strategy respondents used to strike some balance between work and family lives. About 5 respondents have indicated that going to church help them to find some sort of balance between their work and family. Following is an excerpt from one of the respondents:

> *I am a Jehovah Witness congregant and you can imagine the number of activities we have to attend. I enjoy doing those activities of preaching. It helps me to regain some sanity after having busy week doing work and family responsibilities (Pamela, aged 40, Senior Lecturer).*

In the above quote, Pamela is signaling the role that religion plays in helping to create some level of balance between one's work and family responsibilities. Previous studies found that religiosity plays a significant role in assisting individual to achieve work–life balance (Patel, 2009; Sav, 2016). Religion is an important factor to consider as we try to understand work-family and more generally work-nonwork balance. This is mainly due to the fact that one's involvement in a religion

often influences the way one governs his or her professional and family life (Patel, 2009). It is therefore, not surprising that some respondents considered going to church as a way through which they strike some balance between their work and family duties.

4.4.3 Strategies currently used by the university to help enhance work-life balance

The aim of this section is to introduce the findings with regard to the respondents' views on strategies currently used by the University to help Black female academics achieve work-life balance. The findings let out that majority of respondents (7) have indicated that they were not aware of the existence of any programme or strategy that the University is currently using to staff members and Black female academics in particular to achieve a work-life balance. The following quote represents the views of the 7 respondents:

> *I am not aware of any programme that is aimed at helping staff members achieve work-life balance. The only programmes I am aware of are those that help improve the performance of workers (Ruth, aged 48, Senior Lecturer).*

The fact that majority of respondents were not aware of any programme that the University is using to help staff members, in particular Black Female academics as seen in Ruth's quote says a lot about its commitment in assisting its staff members to strike a balance between their work and personal lives. The fact that many of the respondents reported being unaware of any strategy aimed at helping staff achieve work-life balance means either the University does not have these strategies in place, or the University does not conscientize its academic staff about their existence. It is critical for University management to acknowledge the importance of the University's participation in helping academic staff achieve work-life balance. As Haddon (2009) noted, successful management of work-life balance is more likely to be a success where an active, joint contribution from both employers and employees exists.

The remaining 3 respondents have identified staff retreats as the only strategy the University employs to help its staff achieve a work-life balance. These retreats involve the University's arranging retreats for staff members away from the campus. The main purpose of this arrangement

is to allow academic staff members opportunity to go and develop articles for publications without disturbances from their students. Following is an extract from [Cindy, aged 31, Lecturer]:

> *Yes, Our University has writing retreats because they understand that we do not have time to do that at work. We focus on writing and we have people there to assist us such as Statisticians. Even if I write two pages during a retreat that will be an achievement because I would not be able to do it here at work (Cindy, aged 31, Lecturer).*

Cindy's quote bespeak the importance of the management's involvement in any programme that is geared at assisting staff members achieve work-life balance. There is therefore, a need for the University to consider implementing more of these programmes, particularly those geared at assisting Black-female academics.

4.4.4 Strategies perceived by Black female academics to be effective ways of helping them achieve work-life balance.

This section gives out the findings of the respondents regarding what they perceived could be possible strategies that the University could adopt to help Black female academics achieve a work-life balance. One main suggested strategy was identified by about half (5) of the respondents believing that the University should consider establishing a day-care center within the University that would take care of employees' children. The argument from these respondents is that Black-female academics with young children spend a lot of time accompanying their kids to and from day care centers. This on its own could be stressful for these women considering both the morning and afternoon pick-hour traffic. Having a day-care within the University premises means these women would not have wake up earlier than normal in order to take their kids to school on time and they would not arrive home late as they had to go pick up their kids from day-care center. Following is a quote from one of the respondents addressing the importance of day-care:

> *The institution must move into a one-stop shop facility for example having a pre-school here so that those with children can place their children there to reduce the*

time they spend accompanying and going to fetch the children (Pamela, aged 40, Senior Lecturer).

Pamela's comment demonstrates Black-female academics' need for any kind of assistance they can have to relieve them from some of the many duties that hinder them from attaining a work-life balance. The findings on social factors have identified family responsibilities as one of the main barriers hindering Black-female academics from achieving a work-life balance. If Black-female academics, particularly those with families are to achieve a work-life balance, measures geared at relieving them need to be put in place.

In addition to the establishment of day-care center as a possible option, 3 respondents further identified flexi-working hours as another potential strategy that the University should consider, arguing that women should be allowed to work remotely. This arrangement will mean these women are not having stipulated hours of coming to work and can only come when they have work that requires them to be physically present (i.e. teaching, and administration of tests). Other aspects of their work such as marking of their scripts and supervising of students' research projects can be done remotely. Following is an excerpt from one of the respondents:

My suggestion is that Black-female academics should be allowed to have flexible working hours. For instance, instead of women coming to work at eight they can be allowed to come at ten after completing some of the family duties such as dropping their kids off at school. They can always compensate for those hours by leaving at six (Tsholofelo, aged 33, Lecturer).

Tsholofelo's argument is a representative of the other 2 respondents who suggested flexi working hours as a possible strategy to be adopted. Their reason for advocating for the use of flexi working hours is that its implementation will afford Black-female academics with an opportunity to create a balance between their work and family responsibilities. They further argued that allowing Black-female academics to work remotely would also help them with their article development and publishing, as they will be able to work without disruptions that they normally experience at work with students constantly coming into their offices. These findings are consistent with those of

Reddy (2015). Reddy found that flexi time and child care referrals played a significant role in helping women keep a balance between work and family (2015).

4.4. Conclusion

This chapter presented, discussed and analyzed the findings from the study-based themes that emerged from the study findings and objectives. Major themes that emerged were personal experiences regarding balancing work with life, factors hindering work life balance, Strategies ensuring work life balance, strategies used by the University and the perceived ideal strategies for work life balance. The following chapter outlines the conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter provided the presentation and analysis of the qualitative data collected through semi-structured interviews held with ten Black female academics from one of the Gauteng's Universities. This chapter outlines a summary of the study's major findings, conclusions, offers recommendations and suggests directions for future research .

5.2 Summary of results

The importance of being able to strike a balance between one's work and personal lives cannot be overemphasized. Achieving work-life balance does not only enhance one's physical health and social well-being, but also increase their productivity at work. Work life balance is therefore, critical in that all stakeholders (i.e. employees and employers) always work together to ensure that employees strike a balance between their work and personal lives. The aim of this study was therefore, to explore the experiences of Black female academics working at a University in Gauteng with regard to their ability to strike a work-life balance. This was achieved through specific secondary objectives. In line with the first objective that explored the personal experiences of Black female academics regarding their work-life balance. The findings revealed that all respondents had a clear understanding of the meaning of the term 'Work-life balance". The findings further revealed that many of the respondents struggled to achieve personal work-life balance, a consequence of work and personal related factors as shown below.

The second secondary objective was to determine some of the key factors that were hindering Black female academics from achieving work-life balance. The findings of this study revealed that Black-female academics are confronted by both personal and work-related challenges that hinder them from achieving work-life balance. Some of the main personal challenges included family responsibilities, patriarchal and cultural practices. On the other hand, work overload, lack of

recognition and lack of respect by male senior colleagues were identified as important work-related challenges confronting Black-female academics.

The third objective of this study aimed to consider the forces responsible for maintaining and furthering work-life balance by Black female academics. The findings revealed that, marital status plays a pivotal role in determining a good work-life balance. Unmarried Black-female academics reported being able to strike a balance between their work and family duties. On the contrary, married respondents reported finding it hard to achieve a work-life balance. This was mainly attributed to many family responsibilities that married academics are supposed to perform as compared to their unmarried counterparts. Unlike their married counterparts, unmarried Black female academics did not have to carry out duties associated with being a married woman such as cooking for husbands and children.

The fourth objective of this study was to understand the views of Black female academics with regard to the strategies currently used by the University to help enhance work-life balance. Majority of respondents indicated that they were not aware of any University programme specifically geared at helping staff members, particularly Black-female academics to achieve their work-life balance. These findings demonstrate that some institutions of higher learning may lack consideration of the needs and welfare of academic staff in general and Black female academics in particular. It is also probable that these institutions do not market the wellness programmes to staff, which is why the respondents were unable to identify the programmes.

Lastly, the study further aimed to document strategies that Black female academics perceived to be effective ways of helping them achieve work-life balance. Going to church was identified as one main strategy that majority of respondents employed to strike a balance between work and personal life. These findings confirm earlier findings, which showed that one's involvement in a religion often influences the way one governs his or her professional and family life (Patel, 2009).

5.3 Recommendations

Given the results obtained in this study, the following recommendations are made:

5.3.1. Recommendations for the higher education

The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) in conjunction with Institutions of Higher Learning (IHLs) should consider developing necessary guidelines to help in developing programmes aimed at helping academic staff achieve work-life balance.

5.3.2 Recommendations for the university

Perhaps, the University should provide more support to Black female academics by conducting a thorough job analysis of workloads of female academics and restructure their job specifications and job descriptions having taken into account the need that Black female academics should be more flexible according to their needs for them to be able to have a favourable work life balance. There is a need for the University to provide an environment that support employees in establishing and maintaining a balance between their work and non-work lives. This could include the establishment of Early Childhood Development Centres (ECDs) within the campus where staff members could take their children.

The University need to establish employee health and wellness unit and create awareness about the existence of such a unit. Such a move will ensure that emerging Black female academics are aware of the availability of resources meant to help them achieve Work-life balance. The University need to establish a sustainable mentorship programme for Black female academics and it should include marketing of support programmes

5.3.3. Black female academics

Develop networking support system aimed at providing support to those academics who might be struggling to achieve Work-Life balance. They should be encouraged to seek assistance from Employee health and wellness official/s. The female academics should take advantage of the

connectivity and use of e-technology to find solutions or ways to balance their work and their social life, use it to collaborate with other researchers across the globe, and use technology to allow them to work from home to minimise time they spend travelling to work.

5.3.4. Future research

Further research is necessary to inform the development of strategies that academics might adopt and structural changes that organisations might introduce to enhance work-life balance. Further research is required on a wide scale that considers a sample from traditional Universities, which are academic in focus; Universities of technology, which are vocational; and comprehensive Universities, which offer a combination of both types of qualification and also from private Universities. Future studies should explore work-life balance and compare it based on the differences of gender, age, and other personal demographic variables. More studies should be conducted to determine or examine how stages of life such as marriage, pregnancy, childbirth, and child rearing affect the performance of female academics at workplaces.

5.4 Conclusion

The researcher explored the personal experiences of Black female academics regarding their ability to achieve Work-life balance. Its findings highlighted various factors that still confront Black female academics, which result in them failing to balance work with life. These results are useful for both University management and the DHET because they highlight factors that continue to place Black female academics on the back foot as compared to their White and male counterparts regarding balancing work with life. Furthermore, the results of this study are crucial criteria for assessing the effectiveness of programmes that institutions of higher learning are employing to help their staff achieve a Work-life balance. Perhaps of particular importance is that the findings represent the voice of the Black female academics, bringing to fore some of the key challenges that confront them daily. Based on the findings of this study, it is safe to conclude that Black female academics are still confronted with many challenges (i.e. personal and work related) that makes it hard for them to balance work with life. The situation is aggravated by lack of support system from some Universities to help them balance their work and family. Therefore, there is a

need for a coordinated effort from all relevant stakeholders (i.e. University management, staff, Labour unions, the department of higher education) that will culminate in the development and implementation of programmes and strategies geared at helping staff in general, and Black female academics in particular achieve their Work-life balance.

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7. APPENDIXES

7.1. Appendix 1: Interview guide

TOPIC: WORK LIFE BALANCE: THE EXPERIENCES OF BLACK FEMALE ACADEMICS AT A UNIVERSITY IN GAUTENG

Section A: Demographic information

1. Kindly provide me with the following information regarding your demographic details.

1.1. Your age.
1.2. Your marital status
1.3. Your highest qualification
1.4. Your position at work
1.5. For how long have you been in this position?
1.6. Who do you report to?
1.7. What is the gender and race of your superior?

Section B: Question with regard to the work-life balance

2. Please tell me a little bit about your family
3. What does the concept, "work-life balance" mean to you?
4. What would you say are some of the common challenges confronting Black female academics in their quest to striking a balance between their work and non-work domains?
5. How do you strike a balance between your work commitments and family responsibilities?
6. How do you normally spend your leisure time?

7. Do you know of the existence of any university programme or policy geared at enhancing work-life balance of its academic staff members?

8. If your answer to the previous question is yes, what are your views on the effectiveness of the policy and/or programmes you identified as tools to help academic staff achieve a work-life balance?

9. If you were the vice chancellor what interventions would you put in place for academics, particularly Black female academics to attain a balance between work and non-work domains?

10. Do you have any other information to share which you believe might assist the university's Black female academic staff achieve a work-life balance?

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7.2. Appendix 2: Participant Information Sheet

TOPIC: WORK LIFE BALANCE: THE EXPERIENCES OF BLACK FEMALE ACADEMICS AT A UNIVERSITY IN GAUTENG

Good day

My name is Mr. Muthala M.S, a Master of Occupational Social Work student at the University of Witwatersrand with student No: 2005549. Part of the degree requirement is that students must carry out a research project under an approved topic. Consequently, my study will be carried under the topic: **WORK LIFE BALANCE: THE EXPERIENCES OF BLACK FEMALE ACADEMICS AT A UNIVERSITY IN GAUTENG**. I would therefore, wish to invite you to take part in this research study as a respondent.

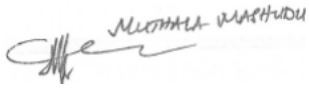
The primary aim of the study is to explore personal experiences of black female academics working at a South African a university with regard to the work-life balance. I have identified you as an ideal respondent because you possess all the characteristics that respondents for this study are expected to meet. As indicated above, the study seeks to explore the work-life balance experiences of Black-female academics working at a University in Gauteng. Therefore, the researcher believes that you will be in a better position to provide relevant information needed for this study.

Please note that your participation is entirely voluntary and *you will be free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason*. I will explain to you all the processes regarding the study. You will also be afforded an opportunity to ask any question you might have regarding the study. If you decide to participate a consent form will be given to you to sign. I will set up an appointment to meet with you for an interview. Questions that you are going to be asked relates to the topic under investigation. The interview will take place at a time and venue convenient to you. It is estimated that the interview will last for about 45 minutes. If it happens that there are still outstanding questions to be asked

after the set time, I will either request for extra few minutes or arrange to meet with you again on another day. The interview will be audiotaped with your consent. The reason for recording the interview is to ensure that I capture everything you are going say. However, you retain the right to object to being audio recorded. Please note that you will not be remunerated because of being a respondent in this study. I am not aware of any risk associated with this study. Although there might not be direct benefits that you will gain as a respondent, the findings of this study might influence the implementation of strategies geared at helping Black female academics strike a balance between work and private commitments. Should you require a psychological debriefing/counselling due to psychological distress I will be more than willing to arrange the services of our local psychologist for you. She is Mrs. Moholo Molebogeng and she can be contacted at (012)5213806, alternatively at Molebogeng.moholo@smu.co.za. All information that is collected about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. The findings of this study will be published in the final dissertation to be submitted to the university. The findings might further be published through journal articles. Lastly, my supervisor and myself, we are available to answer any question that you might have regarding the study. You can contact me at 0724612348 or ksinyela@gmail.com. My supervisor is Dr. Roshini Pillay and She can be contacted at 011 717 4472 or at Roshini.pillay@wits.ac.za.

Thank you for taking the time to consider participating in this study.

Yours sincerely



Mashudu Shadrack Muthala

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7.3. Appendix 3: Consent form for participating in the study

TOPIC: WORK LIFE BALANCE: THE EXPERIENCES OF FEMALE ACADEMICS AT A UNIVERSITY IN GAUTENG

I hereby consent to participate in the research study. The purpose and procedures of the study have been explained to me.

I understand that:

- My participation in this study is voluntary and I may withdraw from the study without being disadvantaged in any way.
- I may choose not to answer any specific questions asked if I do not wish to do so.
- There are no foreseeable benefits or particular risks associated with participation in this study.
- My identity will be kept strictly confidential, and any information that may identify me, will be removed from the interview transcript.
- A copy of my interview transcript without any identifying information will be stored permanently in a locked cupboard and may be used for future research.
- I understand that my responses will be used in the write up of a masters project and may also be presented in conferences, book chapters, journal articles or books .

Name of Participant: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

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7.4. Appendix 4: Informed consent: Tape recording

TOPIC: WORK LIFE BALANCE: THE EXPERIENCES OF FEMALE ACADEMICS AT AUNIVERSITY IN GAUTENG

I hereby consent to tape-recording of the interview.

I understand that:

- The recording will be stored in a secure location (a locked cupboard or password-protected computer) with restricted access to the researcher and the research supervisor.
- The recording will be described and any information that could identify me with will be removed.
- When the data analysis and write-up of the research study is complete, the audio-recording of the interview will be kept for two years following any publications or for six years if no publications emanate from the study.
- The transcripts with all identifying information directly linked to me removed, will be stored permanently and may be used for future research.
- Direct quotes from my interview, without any information that could identify me may be cited in the research report or other write-ups of the research .

Name of respondent: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Appendix 6: Ethics clearance

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DEPARTMENTAL HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (SOCIAL WORK) CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

PROTOCOL NUMBER: SW/19/05/16

PROJECT TITLE: Work Life Balance: The Experiences of Black Female Academics at a University in Gauteng

RESEARCHER/S: M. Muthala (2005549)

SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT: SHCD Social Work

DATE CONSIDERED: 16 May 2019

DECISION OF THE DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE: Approved

RATIFIED BY THE WITS HREC (NON-MEDICAL): 21 June 2019

EXPIRY DATE: 26 October 2021

DATE: 26 October 2019 **CHAIRPERSON: Dr F. Masson**

Cc: Supervisor: Dr Roshini Pillay

DECLARATION OF RESEARCHER(S)

To be completed in **DUPLICATE** and **ONE COPY** returned to the Administrative Assistant, Room 8, Department of Social Work, Umthombo Building Basement.

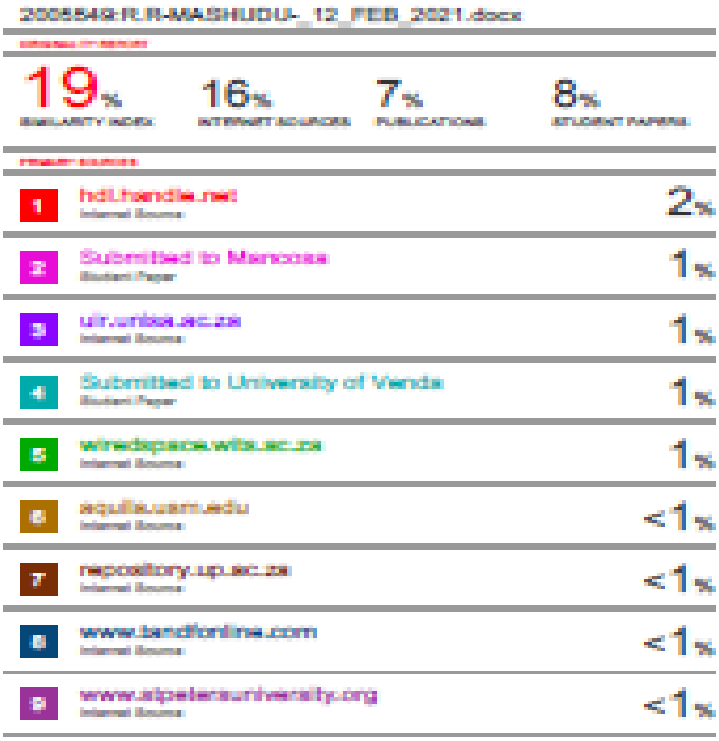
I/We fully understand the conditions under which I am/we are authorised to carry out the abovementioned research and I/we guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to resubmit the protocol to the committee. **For Masters and PhD an annual progress report is required.**

---------- --------/--------/----------
SIGNATURE DATE

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER ON ALL ENQUIRIES

SIGNATURE
26 October 2019

Appendix 7: Turnitin Report



2005549:R.R-MASHUDU-_12_FEB_2021.docx

ORIGINALITY REPORT			
19% SIMILARITY INDEX	16% INTERNET SOURCES	7% PUBLICATIONS	8% STUDENT PAPER