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Qwelane, Nomsa

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Challenges faced by women in obtaining leadership roles in South African Higher Learning Institutions

A Research Proposal presented for the degree of
Masters in Business Administration
in the Wits Business School,
University of the Witwatersrand



UNIVERSITY OF THE
WITWATERSRAND,
JOHANNESBURG

by

Nomsa Qwelane
1768811
WBS/BA1768811/355

DECLARATION

I **Nomsa Qwelane** declare that this research report entitled **"Challenges faced by women in obtaining leadership roles in South African Higher Learning Institutions"** is my own unaided work except as indicated in the acknowledgements. I have acknowledged, attributed, and referenced all ideas sourced elsewhere. I am hereby submitting it in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Business Administration at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. I have not submitted this report before for any other degree or examination to any other institution.



Nomsa Qwelane

Signed at Wits Rural on 12 November 2021

Name of candidate	**Nomsa Qwelane**
Student number	**1768811**
Telephone numbers	**076 4130 463**
Email address	**qwelanen@gmail.com**
First-year of registration	**January 2020**
Date of proposal submission	**January 2021**
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Name of supervisor	**Dr Roselyn Koech**
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ABSTRACT

Author: Nomsa Jean Qwelane **Supervisor** Dr. Roselyne Koech

Research title: Challenges faced by women in obtaining leadership roles in South African Higher Learning institutions

The role of women in leadership positions in the South African Higher Learning Institutions (HLI) is crucial. It is inclusive to women from different ethnic groups, ages, abilities, socioeconomic status, and various other women who face marginalization due to their different walks of life. South Africa is formed of diverse societies; hence, HLI should enrol women from diverse backgrounds; however, the policy is not inclusive of women's leadership roles. This has a negative impact on their work performance. Therefore, this study is inquisitive to understand whether the barriers are identifiable in policies of HLI. This study aimed to identify and characterise opportunities for growth for women in higher education institutions. Eleven adult females in senior administrative positions between the ages of 25 and 65 participated in the study. A phenomenological approach, including The Glass Cliff Theory, was used to ground the study. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data and further analysed thematically. Results showed that the executive management had played a pivotal role in implementing diversity policy, such as removing these barriers. However, the participants have noted the fundamental challenge of the policies was not its framework but rather the speed at which it was implemented.

Key words: Women in leadership, Higher Learning Institutions, South Africa, Academia, Gender, Barriers, Mentoring, Policy Development, Succession

Acornhoek, November 2021

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

RSA: Republic of South Africa

HLI: Higher Learning Institutions

FTSE: Financial Times Stock Exchange

TVET: Technical Vocational education and Training

FET: Further Education and Training

DHET: Department of Higher Education and Training

HR: Human Resources

PL1: Post Level One

1 INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH

1.1 Background and context

More generally, this research investigates the challenges faced by women in obtaining leadership roles in South African Higher Learning institutions

The Republic of South Africa (RSA) has 26 Universities, and four universities are led by Women (Macupe, 2020). The statistics depict an incomplete picture of the current status of gender equity within leadership in Higher Learning Institutions (HLI). The lack of gender balance can indicate potential challenges that women in academia face in reaching strategic leadership positions.

Higher Learning institutions have made a great effort in hiring women in academic and administrative roles; however, women in key leadership roles are minimal (Marumo, 2016). In higher education, cultural stereotypes exist and influence the institutions not to give the same cognisance to men and women in the academic space. These stereotypes are not limited to the biologically based assumptions that highlight the differences between women and men (Rudman & Glick, 2008). For instance, women are viewed as weak because of their gentle and kind qualities, whilst men are viewed as strong due to their aggressive and bold qualities (World Bank Report, 2014).

As this may be the case, institutions are making noticeable strides at improving physical access for women. However, there are no growth strategies in place to ensure women will successfully occupy positions of power and influence (Bishop 2006; Le Feuvre 2009; Morley 2005). Kloot (2004) has asserted that higher education institutions have a perception that women are unqualified for these positions. Hence, men are rendered to hold higher social roles and masculine careers such as engineers, lawyers, and Chief Executive positions. In other instances, even blue-collar roles that are construction-related that need physical strength were all classified as masculine required jobs (Gabriel & Schmitz, 2007).

Green et al. (as cited in Marumo, 2016) state the difference between men and women, which is entrenched in culture and institutional systems that act as a barrier to

women's access into the organisation since they are perceived as belonging at home due to their nurturing roles. The Department of Higher Learning released their Statistics on Post-School Education and Training in South Africa (2016). The report indicates that the most significant portion of the women staffing is distributed extensively within the administrative segments of HLI's, with gross gender asymmetry in the instruction and research segment (Department of Higher Education, 2018, p. 26).

Furthermore, a mirage is created by the aggregate statistics, which indicate an approximate symmetry in gender equity in total staffing. The context raises questions about the potential actual distribution within the administrative segments where traditionally, the leadership of the HLI would sit. In addition to this, where are the bottlenecks that impede women from attaining leadership positions? Therefore, this study aims to find growth strategies that can be implemented and systems that can be followed to identify the unfair gender treatment that is taking place in institutions.

1.2 Research conceptualisation

1.2.1 The research problem statement

This study is based within the context of the current existing South African higher education, with a strong focus on gender equity. Across many industries, women are found to be the least represented gender in key leadership roles in the workforce (World Bank Report 2014). It is noted that despite the debate over women's underrepresentation in higher education, the Department of Higher Education (2018) has admitted that higher education in South Africa has made significant progress in ensuring that doors are opened for women to join academia. Such as allowing stakeholders to reflect on policy and practices to share light on possible solutions. For decades entrance of women into leadership and senior positions has been a legacy issue. There seem to be challenges faced by women regardless of the gender equality policy introduced by the democratic government.

According to research, decision-makers tend to view women as less competent and incapable of leading organisations than their male counterparts (Rosette et al., 2008; Riordan & Louw-Potgieter, 2011). Despite the new legislation introduced and restructured post-1994, women are still significantly under-represented in senior

strategic roles at higher learning institutions in South Africa (Riordan & Louw-Potgieter, 2011).

According to Ballenger and Austin (2007), women's advancement to higher-level leadership posts in higher learning administration is constrained by an invisible ceiling. Gender-centred stereotypes are those that are related to the perception disparities between men and women. Women's and men's leadership styles are included in these distinct perspectives.

Furthermore, there were strong qualities in the studies such as Johnson (2014), Klein (2018) done in other context or countries about gender inequality in higher education. However, the studies lacked the significant contextualisation of women in leadership roles and the ability to adequately explain issues of policies experienced by females in the workplace. Therefore, this study will fill in the gap in the literature by investigating the challenges women face in obtaining leadership roles in South African Higher Learning institutions.

The researcher has identified themes that previous research did not recognise and the method used has allowed the study to look at these prevailing themes that will assist in identifying the existing barriers that impedes the admission of women into critical roles within HLI.

1.2.2 The research purpose (aim and objectives) statement

The research aims to find growth strategies that can be implemented and systems that can be followed to identify the unfair gender treatment that is taking place in institutions. Furthermore, to understand why management has visibly failed to put succession systems in plans to give internal recruitment a chance before they recruit externally. Lastly, to demystify the notion that women are unqualified to hold positions of power and influence solely based on their leadership styles and qualities. Therefore, the following objectives are proposed.

- Identify visible barrier in policy and operational growth for women in Higher Learning Institutions.
- Assess the succession planning for women in leadership roles.

- Evaluate policy intervention mechanisms that support gender equity and representation in HLI.

1.2.3 The research questions.

The proposed research study will attempt to resolve the following questions.

1.2.3.1 Question 1: Are there visible barriers that can be identified in policy and operational structures faced by women?

1.2.3.2 Question 2: Does Executive Management in an institution enhance policy on implementing succession planning for women in leadership roles.

1.2.3.3 Question 3: What are the outcomes of eliminating these challenges through policy?

1.3 Delimitations and assumptions of the research study

This research investigates the systematic deficiencies of inclusivity faced by women in South African higher education institutions. Discrimination comprises many different types of being unfairly discriminated against; therefore, limiting the study to one spectrum, gender, will ensure adequate findings and a much rather direct focus.

1.4 Significance of the research study

The study seeks to fill in the gap of assessing and understanding the position of women within the hierarchical management structure as well as understand the impediments that are placed on them. Previous studies looked at leadership solely from the perspective of leadership (Cook & Glass, 2012; Moodly, 2017). Therefore, the study will provide critical insights into what Cook and Glass (2012). “The glass ceiling” or more predominantly anchored in “The Glass Cliff” theory—looking at how women attain leadership positions (Ryan & Haslam, 2005). The study does not simply look into the strategic positioning of the women and what women occupy authoritative positions in the management and administration. Subsequently, there is a cited gap in the literature to understand whether women's leadership is equitable and whether it represents an equitable stake of the management that is central to operational decision-making.

In addition, the significance is also to review the HLI sectors policy in promoting gender equity, considering the roles of succession in management.

Succession includes the ability of HLI to empower their current staffing complement, such as to ensure that women can ascend to the strategic positions aligned with their profession. The study will fill in the gap in the literature in understanding women's key leadership roles in higher education in South Africa.

1.5 Preface to the research report

This study report contains six chapters, Chapter 1 background and context, Chapter 2 literature review, which covers the literature gap and studies that have been conducted. Chapter 3 discusses the research strategy, design, procedures, reliability and validity measures, as well as limitations. Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 present and discuss the findings, respectively, to interrogate the research questions, while Chapter 6 summarises and concludes the research.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents existing literature to provide an overview of the studies that have been conducted. The literature is disaggregated into gender equity and management that exists in the sector of Higher education. The literature review will assist in identifying the knowledge gap for which this study aims to fill. The literature review will commence with section 2.1. The research problem analysis 2.2 Research knowledge gap. Section 2.3 Theoretical framework. Section 2.4 Summary and conclusion.

2.1 Research problem analysis

2.1.1 Gender Equity in the Higher Learning Institutions

The following subsection highlights Gender equity in Higher Learning Institutions and the barriers that exist to enhance the representation of genders in the institutions. Glass cliff theory is not unique to corporations, as found in Cook and Glass (2012). It is also a prominent feature within the context of higher learning institutions.

In a recent study by Moosa and Coetzee (2020), the authors used an exploratory survey to investigate obstacles for women in South African HLI's in attaining a senior position. This recent study is not unique within the South African perspective as it is historically evident in studies such as Shackleton et al. (2006); Ramohai and Marumo (2016). The studies are consistent with one another and detail how in the presence of redress policy, the progression of women into senior leadership positions continues to be challenged.

In an analysis of the perspective of women progression in HLI's, Ramohai and Marumo (2016) use the Standpoint Theory to investigate the challenges and barriers that women are exposed to in the HLI workplace that consequently impede the respective women from attaining senior positions. The authors, in their analysis, conduct in-depth interviews and a narrative analysis on the responses of 14 women in various positions in HLI's and find that the results are consistent with the existing body of literature. Notably, there is a glass ceiling for women in academia, including

professional challenges that paralyse them from affecting change in the departments they lead (Moosa & Coetzee, 2020; Ramohai & Marumo, 2016).

Thanacoody et al. (2006) investigated the impact of cultural differentials as a factor that slows women's career progression in academia. The authors interviewed females in academics to reveal if the western models of HLI governance have facilitated more women in senior management positions. The authors found that women in the more conservative Mauritius tend to experience considerable difficulties in attaining progression compared to the more liberal Australia (Thanacoody et al., 2006). The findings reinforce the literature by demonstrating the homogeneity of the challenges for women; however, national cultures that are more conservative exhibit greater degrees of hardships to career progression (Thanacoody et al., 2006).

In a similar study, Shackleton et al. (2006) found that social stereotypes are prevalent in some professions. In this case, engineering not only impedes women from attaining senior positions in such academic environments, but the male dominance and gender stereotypes of such professions can even negate young girls from studying the profession (Shackleton et al., 2006). Such an environment infers that female leader in such occupations are few, although there are barriers few women in the space to promote (Shackleton et al., 2006). Ballenger and Austin (2007) also conclude in a narrative analysis that the same barriers identified by Shackleton et al. (2006) are prominent in US HLI's, most especially the issues of access to networks and mentors who are instrumental to career progression. The authors' also find that, as opposed to men, women's career path into administrative leadership in HLI's are slower and more sequential (Ballenger & Austin, 2007).

In a qualitative study conducted by Johnson (2014), the author discovers that there are gender expectations for women who hold senior administrative positions in the HLI's, sometimes finding that these expectations create impediments for the women themselves. The stereotypes such as maternal nurturing associated with women propagate the women's views in senior positions; for instance, the vice-chancellor is not constructed for women (Johnson, 2014). In essence, the women's career trajectory was limited due to the social constructs and expectations (Johnson, 2014).

Consistent with these findings is the study by Blackmore (2002). The author details how there is a requirement for women to create masculine identities in the university space, such as attaining the promotions they desire. This comes from the fact that women are deemed too weak and incapable of making critical and difficult decisions for the benefit of the HLI (Blackmore, 2002). In short, the author found that the perceptions regarding women in leadership are that a woman will not cope under highly exerted work pressure, consequently making poor decisions (Blackmore, 2002). This is still the held view even when women possess superior qualifications than male colleagues when shortlisted for promotions to senior positions (Castleman et al., as cited in Blackmore, 2002). Manz and Sims (1991) discuss how the hierarchical leadership style of men can be found to be inferior to the relationship orientated style of women. This leadership style benefits the HLI as it fosters innovation and enhanced employee performance (Manz & Sims, 1991).

The studies that have been conducted within the space of gender equity within the space HLI illustrate that there is evidence of discrimination within the Higher Learning Institutions (Morley, 2013; Zhuwao et al., 2019). In addition to asymmetries in representation in management, there is an asymmetry in the women's decision-making ability in such senior positions. The bias is informed by social stereotypes applied to women, consequently impeding their progression into senior management positions in the context of HLI's. The studies reviewed in this study emphasise that even in the presence of integrative and redress policies applied in HLI's, inherently social and cultural structures in HLI's create barriers for women in the organisations.

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2.1.2 Organisational Structures in Higher Learning Institutions

Women often enter HLI's both in academia and professional administrative roles at lower levels than their male counterparts. They are less likely to apply for promotion as they are most likely to get fewer rewards and less recognition of their work. This has been found in the case by a study conducted by Kaplan and Tinsley (1989), as the authors articulate that the organisational structure of HLI's is pyramidal in nature. The authority and communication flow from top-to-bottom with a considerable clustering of women at the bottom (Kaplan & Tinsley, 1989), inferring

that woman are strategically alienated from leadership positions and possess limited decision-making and have limited authority within the organisations.

The following subsection of the literature review will investigate how women are arranged within the hierarchy of leadership in an HLI, specifically looking at the administrative or operational departments and the teaching and research departments of the Higher Learning Institutions. Such an investigation is significant in evaluating policy regarding where the most emphasis on gender equity should be placed and why.

2.1.3 Operations and Administration

The Department of Higher Learning released their Statistics on Post-School Education and Training in South Africa: 2016. The report indicates that the most significant portion of the women staffing is distributed extensively within the administrative segments of HLI's, with gross gender asymmetry in the instruction and research segment (DHET, 2018, p26). The quotation speaks to the existing organisational gender orientation within the administration of Higher Learning Institutions. However, it does not disaggregate the roles of the female staffing complement into the various hierarchical components such as management levels.

Moodly (2015) analysed the representation of women within South African HLI's and found that Walter Sisulu University demonstrated 0% women representation within its senior management structures. The study also demonstrated that even in the presence of the Women Empowerment and Gender Equity Bill (Republic of South Africa, 2013), the universities persist in implementing reforms that can bring about reforms poorly. These findings are consistent with the results of studies conducted on redress policy and implementation. These studies will be discussed in the following subsection of the literature review.

2.1.4 Instruction and Research

Within the context of the South African HLI's, the Department of Higher Education states that there are currently about 9011 women categorised as falling within the instruction and research segment of the organisations (DHET, 2016). The statistics illustrate that there is approximately an equal representation of women in the

segment. However, the statistics do not demonstrate the hierarchical structure amongst the instructors (i.e. Lecturers, Senior Lecturers, Professors, etc.). The significance of these arrangements is that women can inform decisions on curriculum and research. Notably, Peterson (2016, p. 113) states that the “increasing proportion of female academic managers does not prove that women have achieved parity with men ". The DHET (2016) statistics illustrate and reiterate the findings of Peterson (2016), most especially in the presence of challenges and barriers experienced by women.

It is critical to understand women's challenges concerning their progression into these senior positions. Consequently, the following section will detail the challenges experienced by women regarding career progression with HLI’s

2.2 Research knowledge gap analysis

2.2.1 Professional Progression Policy in Higher Learning Institutions

The existing policy within HLI said normatively, and it should have policies of professional progression and development such that women can enter into the higher echelons of management. Gonzalez (2010) discusses the distinction between professionals within the space of academia, drawing the line between the Academic administrators (senior position holders such as Deans) in the HLI and the department chairs and lower, which will form part of the causal administrators. This distinction creates the managerial ladder that women climb within the space of academia. Gonzalez (2010) notes that the lack of progression of minorities and women in the organisations results in talent underutilisation. These respective groups are seldom considered within the succession plans of HLI (Gonzalez, 2010).

The author details that the HLI's dual ladder creates an anomaly that can be corrected through adequate training and succession planning (Gonzalez, 2010). The following subsection will review the themes identified above and contextualise them to ascertain how the current professional development policies applied to women and succession planning facilitate the progression of women into strategic and critical management positions in HLI’s. Blum et al. (1994) investigated the management stratification by gender in Medium and Large-sized private cooperation to identify the effect of professional development on the patterns of progression into senior

management. The authors found that the profession's development raises the likelihood of women being promoted to senior positions. Consequently, the woman's ascension into senior management in the organisations was based on professional development and not hiring external individuals into the senior positions (Blum et al., 1994).

Success within the context of HLI's as an academic is driven by the combination of teaching experience and research. This combination sees an academic ascend to higher levels such as heading a school and eventually a faculty. It is thus imperative in the HLI context that the women succeed.

Ober (2014) undertakes a case study analysis of Rhodes University to assess the impediments of women in attaining senior academic positions. The author finds that teaching is perceived as less significant for women in attaining promotion than research productivity. The author details that female academic lack the social capital to enhance their research productivity; subsequently, they cannot attain senior academic positions within the institution (Ober, 2014).

The following findings are consistent with the results of Geber (2009), whereby the author investigates the process of the development of aspiring academics, in a case study of the University of the Witwatersrand and the author stresses the significance of mentoring for academics to develop and grow to the upper echelons of academia. The recurring theme in the literature concerning women's career progression within academia is the significance of mentorship. The factor is critical to women's career progression in the academic workplace as it unlocks resources and opens opportunities for women to demonstrate their competencies. Without mentoring, a woman's career can halt, consequently remaining stagnant (Chandler, 1996).

Consequently, the literature points to mentoring as a critical factor in women's career progression within Higher Learning Institutions. Whereas men in the space have access to mentors who can unlock opportunities, women lack access to social capital, which impedes their progress into senior academic and administrative management positions, consequently resulting in the tapered career growth discussed by Ober (2014); Blum, Fields and Goodman (1994) and Gonzalez (2010).

2.2.2 Professional development as a requirement of succession

The significance of succession in management within the Higher Learning Institutions is detailed and highlighted by Betts et al. (2009), as observed in the United States of America. The existing administrative management investigated by the authors was found to no longer be representative of the society (Betts et al., 2009). To fill the gap that will be left by retiring and male management, the authors reiterate the role of professional development of the new wave of professionals, such as facilitating a smooth transition of the organisations. The succession planning discussed by the authors requires the development of talent that exists within the HLI's such as to assure consistency and continuity (Betts et al., 2009).

These findings are consistent with that of Greer and Virick (2008), where the authors place significant emphasis on the role of professional talent management within the organisation. The authors contribute to the literature by investigating the role of diversification of personnel on the value of organisations (Greer & Virick, 2008). The diversification infers that in the succession planning of the corporation, the current management should consider the incorporation of minorities and the inclusion of women into strategic managerial positions.

Thus, the professional development of women becomes central to an organisation's success, by the authors' findings (Greer & Virick, 2008). Hewitt (2009) articulates the requirement of succession planning for an organisation and its significance for placing talent into strategic positions with the importance of professional development in succession planning.

The above subsection detailed the significance of professional development within the context of an organisation, looking at the development of women in HLIs and how this development through mentoring facilitates the shattering of the glass ceiling. Mentoring and coaching women within an organisation's succession plan enable women's strategic placement in significant senior management positions.

2.2.2.1 Redress Policy in Higher Learning Institutions

The redress policy reviewed in the literature discusses affirmative action as a policy instrument utilised to provide equitable representation within the management, more specifically senior management (Carvahlo, Özkanli & de Lourdes Machado-Taylor, 2012). In a study of Portugal and Turkey, the authors found that the policy has effectively promoted equitable representation through the enhancement of meritorious promotions into senior administrative management positions (Carvahlo, Özkanli & de Lourdes Machado-Taylor, 2012).

Various authors have all acknowledged that there currently exists the necessary framework to enhance the inclusion of women into senior management positions within HLIs (Ramohai & Marumo, 2016; Moosa and Coetzee, 2020; Shackleton, Riordan and Simonis 2006; Carvahlo, Özkanli & de Lourdes Machado-Taylor 2012). They furthermore stated that the policies had made some strides in addressing the representation of women in senior positions within an HLI. The redress policy identifies the critical challenges that continue to confront the state and higher learning institutions if legislated and constitutional values and goals with respect to social equity and redress are to be realised.

The challenges that women are exposed to in the institutions stem from social constructs and patriarchal systems that continue to marginalise women, consequently impeding women's progress into the senior echelons of management. The authors also acknowledge that there is a displacement of authority and decision making in instances where women attain the positions. Thus, this section will review the literature to detail the effectiveness of the existing policy given the above.

2.2.2.2 Assessing the effectiveness of redress policy

Manfredi et al. (2019) investigate the effectiveness of institutional policies in selecting and appointing executive managers within the United Kingdom (UK) HLI’s. The authors found that there exists embedded cognitive bias as well as “entrenched homosocial cultures' ' that impede the effective application of gender-equality orientated policies. The authors found that even in the presence of mitigating factors such as policies on transparency, the bias continues to persist.

Morley (2013) best describes the phenomena as follows:

"While HL reform has created new middle managerial positions including quality assurance, innovation, community engagement and marketing managers (Deem, 2003; Fitzgerald and Wilkinson, 2010; Morley, 2003; Noble and Moore, 2006), many women find themselves in "ivory basements" (Eveline, 2004), or the "velvet ghettos" of communication, finance, human resource management (Guillaume and Pochic, 2009)" (Morley, 2013, p. 5).

The statement echoes the authors' remarks that without cognitive realignment and a cultural shift in society, there will continuously be a bias away from women even when policy within an institution advocates for equity (Morley, 2013).

Gender Equity and Diversity in Management

Gender equity originates from the legal framework for which equity is related to equality or explicit congruence. This is equality in responsibility, position and remuneration (Bailyn, 2003). Equity also refers to equality of opportunities and the equal ability to advance these opportunities, and for these reasons, gender equality differs from gender equity (Bailyn, 2003). Contrary to this, gender diversity is centralised on the belief that all social groups need to be represented proportionally within the management structure of the HLI.

An example of a policy is affirmative action, which is misconstrued to achieve gender equity; however, it is an instrument of gender diversity (Zhuwao et al., 2019). The difference is that diversity infers representation and not equality of opportunities, and gender equity recognises the disadvantages of women to men. Consequently, HR policy that seeks to raise the representation of women within executive positions in HLI seemingly fails to address the historical bottlenecks and to attain gender diversity within a management structure is easier than bringing about equity. Zhuwao et al. (2019) identify the workplace treatment of women as an indication of the absence of equity. The authors bring forward issues such as sexual harassment within the HLI workplace to indicate that representation does not indicate equity (Zhuwao et al., 2019).

2.3 Framework for interpreting research findings

2.3.1 The Glass Cliff Theory

Glass cliff theory observes and investigates the invisible obstacles faced by women in their professional growth trajectory (Bhatia, 2015). The approach extends beyond the gender income gap, which has been investigated extensively in Fuch (1979) and Blau and Kahn (2000) literature. The glass cliff Theory is concerned with the impediments that women experience in attaining senior organisational positions.

Research into gender equity within organisational research is based on the Glass Cliff Theory, pioneered to discuss gender discrimination that women experience, initially in the private sector. However, research has extended into the public sector (Smith, 2015). The issue of gender equity within the Higher Learning sector was resolved at the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation World Conference on Higher Learning (UNESCO, 1998). The policy stance has mandated that gender equity within higher education is crucial and seeks to remove the Glass Cliff in the Higher Learning sector.

Ryan and Haslam (2005) initially conducted a study on the FTSE 100 companies. They found that women were elected as board members of companies when the corporation was in crisis and at the risk of collapse. The authors' work is the seminal work on the Glass Cliff theory, whereby empirical results of gender bias in leadership were identified. Additional evidence of the Glass Cliff is found in Smith (2015). The author uses a US National Sample of Public agencies and finds that women are placed in leadership positions when there are high risks of failure when entities or entities have prominent administrative positions. The authors' results collaborate with the statistics found in DHET (2018), whereby the more prominent agencies or institutions, in this case, have more women in administrative positions.

These findings are consistent with Cook and Glass (2012) findings. Their results indicated that, amongst Fortune 500 companies, ethnic minorities and women are more likely to be placed into organisational leadership than white men when the companies decline within the short to long term. The finding is consistent with those of Peterson (2016), as the author finds, in their study of the Swedish Higher Education system, that women are deliberately placed in positions of power when the institution

is in a difficult and declining organisational circumstance. Through in-depth interviews of 22 senior female leaders in 10 Swedish universities, the author finds that the Glass theory can be applied within the organisational space of HLI (Peterson, 2016).

The generalisation of the theory comes from the fact that women have been vastly under-represented within the leadership of organisations (Eagly & Sczesny, 2009 as cited in Smith, 2015). Smith (2015) also found that women ascend to leadership positions when women occupy positions of key decision-making processes. The lack thereof sees women not attaining strategic leadership positions. Within the South African context, the ceiling exists since society has been anchored in the patriarchal systems, which has impeded women's ascension into leadership positions in management (Akala, 2019).

The hegemonic masculinity has consequently brought about the stereotypical treatment of women within organisations, therefore affecting the gender composition in the organisational structures (Akala, 2019). This embedded culture continues in various spheres of entities, private and public, irrespective of the fact that women have attained sufficient skill sets and competencies for the roles (Smith, 2015). Smith (2015) discusses how women leadership is predominantly found in sectors or agencies where the business activities were deemed feminine. These would include Education and Healthcare; these are consistent with the traits identified by Gabriel and Schmitz (2007).

Peterson (2016) found that women attain senior positions in HLI's; however, working in administrative and low-status positions, which the author finds, makes it undesirable for women to aspire for such positions due to the lack of organisational decision-making. The women are chosen for glass cliff positions in an organisation, not based on the merit to attain the position, but rather on the fact that at the moment of employment, men do not desire the position as the spoils to be enjoyed are far and few (Bruckmuller & Branscombe, 2010). The authors make these findings through an experimental study, whereby the authors used online surveys to assess gender stereotypes around feminine leadership (Bruckmuller & Branscombe, 2010; Mulcahy & Linehan, 2014).

Powell and Butterfield (1994) investigated the glass ceiling phenomenon within the employment patterns of the United States Federal government departments. They found that the gender variable was significant in the promotion decisions of the organisations. Consequently, the authors refute the existence of gender discrimination in the public sector. Following these finds, Dowling (2017) investigated the glass ceiling in the literature and found that authors used inappropriate methodologies and research instruments (i.e. Data) to prove the existence of the glass ceiling. Subsequently, Dowling (2017) argued that the existing findings in the literature are fallacious as the studies indicate inconclusive research and dubious results.

The literature review on the Glass Cliff Theory illustrates that there continues to be a gender bias towards leadership positions. The promotion of women into leadership positions only occurs when there are structural and organisational challenges for which women are placed in precarious positions.

2.4 Summary and conclusion

The chapter provided an overview of the literature within leadership and contextualised it to the Higher Learning Institutions. The literature has identified the gap in the literature that focuses on women leadership and the Glass Ceiling theory. The chapter sets the framework used in the study to assess the barriers faced by women in attaining leadership positions within Higher Learning Institutions. In addition, the chapter brought to the fore issues of diversity and diversity policy within the institutions as an extension of redress policy.

3 RESEARCH STRATEGY, DESIGN, PROCEDURE AND METHODS

The researcher discussed and described the various research methodologies employed in the analysis. As a result, the research methodology will specify both the study framework and the study design. Answering the research questions stated in the first chapter will need the use of research methods and procedures.

3.1 Research strategy

The research strategy aims to answer the research questions. The kind of strategies that exist is Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed method research. Qualitative research is understood as an approach that explores and aims to understand the meaning of individuals or group's social experiences or human problems (Crew, 2013). On the other hand, Quantitative research seeks to test objective theories by examining the relationship among variables. Lastly, Mixed methods research involves collecting quantitative and qualitative data, integrating the two forms of data, and using distinct designs that may include philosophical assumptions and theoretical frameworks (Crew, 2013).

The above strategies mentioned have their strengths and limitations concerning answering the research questions. The study utilised the qualitative approach as the research strategy. The study is interested in the lived experiences of women in the leadership roles of HLIs. Following the work of Ballenger (2010), the author used interviews, which are a form of qualitative research, to resolve the research questions. There are similar studies to this study that were previously researched through the quantitative research strategy. The data was sourced to explain and identify the factors affecting women in the leadership of HLIs.

There were strong qualities in the studies that utilised quantitative strategies. However, the studies lacked the significant contextualisation of women in leadership roles and their ability to adequately explain issues of policies experienced by females in the workplace. Therefore, a qualitative study utilised in-depth interviews, which allowed the researcher to identify themes and dynamics that previous research has not

recognised (Idahosa & Vincent, 2019). The significance of the method is to allow the study to look at the prevailing themes. These themes will assist and identify the existing barriers that impede the admission of women into critical, strategic positions within the HLIs.

3.2 Research design

A research design is a method for gathering, analysing, interpreting, and reporting data in a study (Creswell, 2009). In other words, the research design refers to the techniques followed in a study to address a specific research topic. Furthermore, according to Creswell and Creswells (2018), many study designs dating back to the 1990s are still viable for conducting research. Five qualitative research designs are identified by Creswell and Creswell (2018). 1) A narrative research design is when a researcher looks into people's lives and allows them to tell their stories. 2) In grounded theory, the researcher develops a general abstract process theory. To put it another way, the researcher develops their theory. 3) Ethnography is a research method in which a researcher investigates a pattern of behaviour, language, or culture over a long period. 4) A case study design researcher conducts an in-depth examination of a person, event, program, or group of people. Finally, this study will use the 5) phenomenological research design. This is the point at which the research describes or interprets the lived experience of the participants.

The study aims to discover and recover the challenges that women face in obtaining leadership positions in higher learning, as well as how this phenomenon affects women's experiences. As a result, the phenomenological research design is suitable for this investigation. This has allowed the researchers to have a better knowledge of the phenomenon at hand. The phenomenology is successful in comprehending the participant's challenges and barriers.

Similarly, Johnson (2014) and Idahos and Vincent (2019) used a phenomenological research approach to examine the research issues posed in the study appropriately. The study aimed to track and understand the career paths of female administrators in Sub-Saharan African universities. The authors adopted this design to identify the participants' obstacles and triumphs based on their own lived experiences.

This study design was found to be effective since it provides insights from the perspective of the participants. The writers discovered the universality of the themes using Narrative Analysis and covering several paradigms in a single interview. This has helped the researcher effectively in answering the research questions. Furthermore, as the literature has shown, the research design does not necessitate many observations and recruiting volunteers within the relevant group is not difficult (Due to the few women leaders in higher education).

3.3 Research procedure and methods

The techniques and methods employed in the study will be detailed in the next portion of the research methodology. Section 3.3.1 of the subsection looks at how the required data will be obtained and the instruments that will be used to gather it. The study's sample population and sampling methods will be discussed in Section 3.3.2. This can help you figure out how to get a good sample size and, as a result, reduce attrition bias in the results. The Research Data and information collection instrument(s)will be discussed in Section 3.3.1.

3.3.1 Research data and information collection instrument(s)

The data was gathered through a series of in-depth interviews with research participants. The study guided the narrative and discourse, and the study used an interview schedule. This was congruent with Johnson's phenomenological approach (2014). The adoption of the exploratory structure has necessitated semi-structured interviews in comparison to a fully structured or unstructured interview. The semi-structured interview combined qualitative data with the ability to extend the study's exploratory research paradigm. The interviewee was then given open-ended questions to answer, and this allowed them to tell a story about their experiences (Johnson, 2014).

In addition, semi-structured interviews were used in the data gathering process to allow participants to discuss their experiences in the sector. This approach was exploratory in nature, and it followed Johnson's (2014) and Idahosa and Vincent's methodologies (2019). The exploratory paradigm of the in-depth interview assisted the researchers in answering the research questions. This allowed the researcher to analyse

data using a thematic map of ideas. As a result of conducting the in-depth interviews, the researcher identified the major themes discussed during the interview. As a result, the semi-structured interview allowed the interviewer to ask detailed questions regarding experiences while also allowing the interviewee to respond freely.

3.3.2 Research target population and selection of participants

3.3.2.1 Research target population

The research target population looked at women in leadership positions within Higher Learning Institutions. The expanded scope of HLIs allowed for a more significant inclusion of women in strategic leadership positions. The rationale was that since it has been empirically proven that there are significantly few women in such positions, this definition of HLI has allowed for an expanded population. For the participants to be deemed to be strategic leaders in their HLI, the researcher has referred to the ten roles of leaders identified by Mintzberg (1989) and condensed them into three categories:

- Informational: The participant needed to have a role whereby there is a source of information handling within their sphere.
- Decision-Making: The participant had to be a critical figure in the decision-making process within their sphere (i.e. Departmental, Faculty, University-wide). The participant needed to have an authoritative position in the HLI, at a notable tier of the hierarchy, implying subordinates' responsibility.
- Interpersonal: The participant was a source of liaison between stakeholders for their respective entity and was tasked with the leadership role in their sphere. The framework mentioned above allowed the strict definition of the target population and how to draw from this population. To be specific, the sample can be selected based on geographical proximity or other physical characteristics such as occupational specifications.

The specified target population methodology was applied by Johnson (2014); whereby the author looked at administrators within the HLI, the author was able to sample six participants with women in senior administrative positions. The study has drawn from the similarities in order to be consistent with studies in the literature.

3.3.2.2 Selecting Participants from the target population.

Sampling is the method in which a portion of the target population is selected for analysis. In this aspect, there are varying sampling methodologies. The sampling strategy is based on qualitative research. For which the information will be coded from the in-depth interviews with the participants. Sampling can be differentiated into the Probability sampling techniques such as Simple Random Sampling; Systematic Sampling; Clustered Sampling, and Stratified Sampling (Rout, 2019). In addition, there are methods of Non-Probability techniques: Convenience Sampling; Quota Sampling; Purposive Sampling, and Snowball Sampling.

Given the current social conditions and uncertainty with the Novel Coronavirus, the sampling strategy will require the uptake of a convenience sampling strategy. Though this sampling methodology may induce systemic challenges and create a significant challenge for the reliability and generalizability of the results, it is relatively inexpensive. It can be conducted timeously (Ascholar, 2020). This gives the researcher the advantage of extending the pool and having more observations.

3.3.3 Ethical considerations.

Anonymity was granted to participants to keep their personal information and accounts private. In addition to maintaining participant confidentiality, the researcher seeks informed consent from the participant (Haverkamp, 2005). The researcher made the data available to the participant once the study was over (Haverkamp, 2005).
Due to the sensitivity and nature of the study, the participants' expressed emotions and deep feelings that were considered during the in-depth interviews. The researcher was considerate to the participants' relationships and kept contact to a minimum.

3.3.4 Research data and information collection process

For a qualitative study, various data gathering approaches, particularly in-depth interviews, might be used. Face-to-face, telephonic, and internet-based communication channels are all appropriate.

The face-to-face mediums are restricted because of the Coronavirus, and this is purely a preventative measure. Thus, the researcher used an internet-based platform

to collect data. Video Calling systems such as Microsoft Teams and Zoom are two alternatives that have gained in popularity. These systems facilitate data collecting by allowing the researcher to record interviews. The audio and video recordings of the recorded interviews were available immediately after the meeting. These platforms also provided the ability to transcribe the content from the meeting. These devices improved data collection while also performing real-time transcription.

The use of face-to-face interviews was suggested in the literature. In this method, data is gathered from an audio recording, which would normally necessitate laborious transcription. As previously indicated, the current health crisis of Covid-19 makes face-to-face communication impossible.

3.3.5 Research data and information processing and analysis

3.3.5.1 Research data and information processing

Cleaning and altering data that is sufficiently prepared for analysis is classified as research data and information processing. The research's data collection was done using qualitative methods.

The in-depth interviews were transcribed to prepare for data for analysis. This is where the material is scripted and transcribed. The information is thus far prepared for thematic analysis because this thematic data analysis is based on a review and analysis of the text data from the interviews. Similarly, the narrative analysis gets its data from texts, ranging from public text like newspapers to underlying narratives in a population or sample.

3.3.5.2 Research data and information analysis

The research data and analysis will be based on the qualitative analysis technique to explore the research questions mentioned in chapter one. Consequently, the data analysis will rely on qualitative techniques such as Thematic analysis, which will assess the responses' causation and linkages. The thematic analysis is used in the Johnson (2014) study, which looked at the gender roles and leadership concerning the administration within the HLI.

3.3.6 Description of the research participants

The participant's descriptions were discussed in order to be specific to the participant's gender and fit within the stated framework stated in section 3.3.2. Statistics on their work title and their tenure in their present position, and their professional history will be included in the extra attributes.

3.4 Research strengthens—reliability and validity measures applied.

Evaluating the contribution of the findings, the question of the analysis's reliability and validity is critical. Internal validity, according to Healy and Perry (2000), is used in positivist research to determine the effect or contribution of one variable (independent variable) on another (dependent variable). Statistical tests can be used to assess quantitative analysis' reliability and validity (Noble & Smith, 2015). However, qualitative investigations, which are criticised for their lack of scientific methodology, make this challenging (Noble & Smith, 2015).

These statistical tests or measures cannot be employed in qualitative research due to the differences in research designs. As a result, Noble and Smith (2015) explain that the Truth Value and Consistency of the responses define the question of validity and reliability in qualitative research. To ensure that the study is trustworthy, Morse et al. (2002) state that under the qualitative paradigm, the following elements must be met: credibility, suitability, conformability, and fittingness.

The researcher employed Morse et al. (2002); Noble and Smith (2015) ways for increasing the credibility of results, of which the researcher included:

1. The worth of the truth

Self-reflexivity and reflection on one's point of view:

- The researcher keeps a journal and reflects on important points and judgments.
- Peer conversations helped the researcher uncover hidden biases or double-check assumptions.
- The findings' representativeness regarding the phenomena:
- Participants can be invited to comment on the research findings and themes.

- The researcher utilized a reasonable sample size, which was 11 participants.
- Using semi-structured audio-recorded interviews allowed the researcher to go back over the interviews and double-check emergent topics.

2. **Consistency/Neutrality/ Achieving auditability**:

- A transparent and precise description of the research process from the initial outline develops the methods and reporting of findings. In addition, maintaining a research diary documenting challenges and issues assisted in maintaining cohesion between the study's aim, design and methods.
- Emerging themes discussed with research team members who had palliative and qualitative research expertise in an open process where assumptions could be challenged and consensus reached (Noble & Smith, 2015).
- Ballenger and Austin (2007) state that the method of peer review of their survey questions had assisted in removing inconsistent questions and assisting in evaluating the quality of the responses.

3.5 Research weaknesses—technical and administrative limitations

A fundamental challenge of the study was to attain a representative sample of women within the sector. Since there are sampling issues, this lead to challenges of the Truth value of the study. This created a challenge for the applicability of the findings.

3.6 Chapter Summary

The approach that was used in the study to analyse and resolve the research question posed in Chapter one is detailed in this chapter. Semi-structured interviews were used to determine the important themes that influence women achieving leadership positions in Higher Learning Institutions. In terms of the validity and trustworthiness of the outcomes, the approach has some flaws. However, it provides insight into the problems that women face and determines what interventions might be proposed, such as easing the transition into leadership and increasing leadership diversity.

4 PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH RESULTS

This section presents the results from the semi-structured interviews conducted. The interviews sought to answer the following three research questions; Are there visible barriers identified in policy and operational structures faced by women? Does the Executive Management in your institution enhance policy on implementing succession planning for women in leadership roles? What could be the outcome of eliminating these challenges through policy? The results are presented as follows; the sample in subsection 4.1. The demographic attributes of participants then continue to deconstruct the responses into the themes of the study in subsection 4.2. In subsection 4.3, the study will present the causal mapping, which seeks to analyse the thematic analysis. Subsection 4.4 will give a summary of the chapter and conclude the results.

4.1 Demographic attributes of the participants

The subsection of the analysis will review the demographic attributes of the participants, which are consistent with the criteria of the sample. The sample of the participants is depicted in Table 1 below. The characteristics of the participants indicate there is a balanced representation of the participants within the sample and the sample has a combination of experienced managers and diversity in age. The sample consists of seven administrative managers and four of academic managers. All the participants hold a postgraduate degree. Nine participants have over ten years of experience, while two participants have a minimum of four years. The participants interviewed were Indian, black, and white, and three are Indian, seven are blacks, and only one participant was white. Lastly, ten participants were less than 65 years of age, and one participant was older than 65.

The sample population of eleven participants interviewed for this study might be considered small. However, Dworkin (2012) discusses the issue of a small sample within qualitative analysis and highlights that the most critical drawback of a small sample in a qualitative study is saturation, whereby there are strict constraints on the types of responses that are attained from the interviewees. Although, the sample has been controlled for gender. The questions have been constructed in such a manner to mitigate the issue of saturation.

Table 1: Demographic attributes of the Interview participants

Respondent	*Age*	*Level of Education*	*Ethnic Background*	*Years of Experience*	*Administrative/academic*
P1	35-44	Post Graduate	Black	7-9	Administrative
P2	55-64	Post Graduate	Indian	+10	Administrative
P3	45-54	Post Graduate	Black	+10	Administrative
P4	55-64	Post Graduate	White	+10	Academic
P5	25-34	Post Graduate	Black	+10	Administrative
P6	45-54	Post Graduate	Indian	+10	Administrative
P7	45-54	Post Graduate	Black	4-6	Academic
P8	35-44	Post Graduate	Black	+10	Administrative
P9	45-54	Post Graduate	Indian	+10	Academic
P10	65+	Post Graduate	Black	+10	Academic
P11	45-54	Post Graduate	Black	+10	Administrative

4.2 Presentation of interview results

The following section will present the themes, sub-themes and the participant's quotes from the interviews. The themes were derived using thematic analysis. The themes identified are Identified visible barriers in policy and operational structures, Succession planning for women in leadership roles, and policy interventions to eliminate the identified challenges. These themes are critical to answering the research questions presented in chapter one.

4.2.1 Theme 1: Identified visible barriers in policy and operational structures.

This study was conducted to identify visible barriers in policy and operational structures that the participants perceive to affect the progression of women into leadership roles in the workplace. The following sub-themes were identified: the ability to identify and types of barriers. The themes sought to assess if there are barriers that are prevalent in the institution and whether there have been previously identified by the participants.

4.2.1.1 Sub-Theme: Ability to identify visible barriers

The data illustrates that 73% of the participants identify the barriers in their respective institution, whilst the remaining participants stipulated that there are no barriers to the progression of women in the institutions. Predominantly the participants identify the barriers within the administrative segment of the Higher Learning Institutions. Academics have also noted barriers to management progression within the dimension of attaining senior academic titles, i.e. Professorship**.**

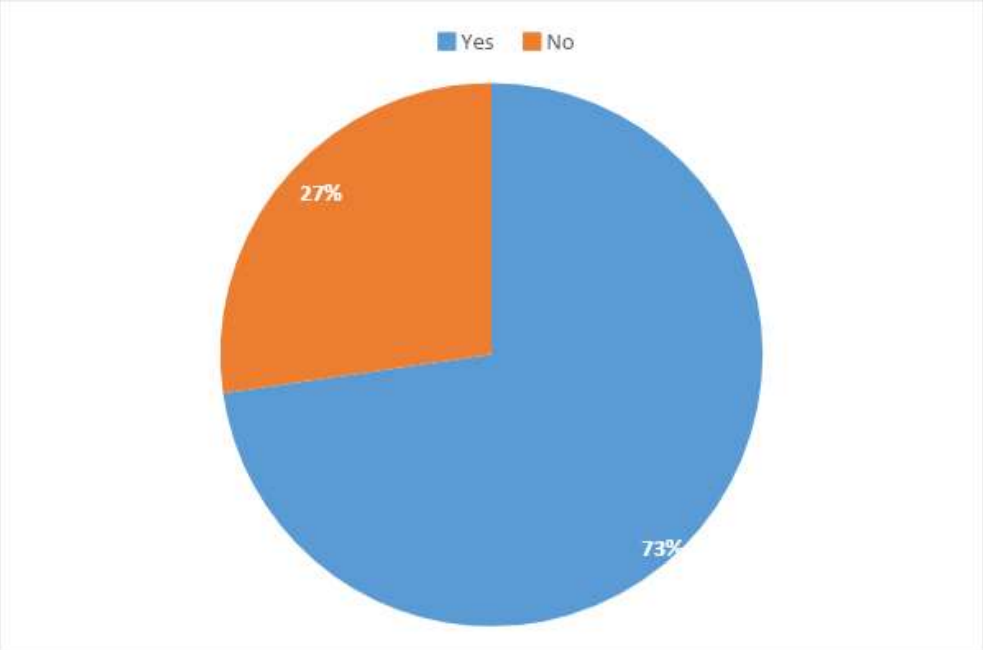

Figure 1: Participants Responses to Identified Barriers

4.2.1.2 Sub-theme: Types of Barriers

The following sub-theme highlights the types of barriers that the participants have identified. These barriers form a considerable portion of the hindrances to women attaining managerial and leadership positions within their higher education institutions. The data is extracted from the participants that stated that they had identified barriers in their institution. The results are depicted in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Types of Barriers identified by participants.

Respondent	*Types of Barriers*	*Key Words*	*Barrier Theme*
P1	*"The barriers are institutional and have turned into a culture."*	*Institutional, Culture*	*Institutional*
P2	*N/A*		
P3	*"Fellow colleagues not recognising your new role as their new manager…. Women generally are not being taken seriously, particularly by male counterparts."*	*Recognise, Taken Seriously*	*Lack of Recognition*
P4	*N/A*		
P5	*"The challenge is always around being taken seriously (for lack of a better word)"*	*Recognise, Taken Seriously*	*Lack of Recognition*
P6	*"I would say stereotyping, prejudice, family demands and lack of opportunities."*	*Stereotyping, Prejudice*	*Sexism*
P7	*"There has been a general inclination that men are stronger and command more respect in leadership positions than women. These created some fear even to dare to apply for leadership positions. The institutional demands for an equal number of publications despite women's additional role of taking care of children and doing home cooking and chores limits women's chances of getting higher degrees and publications required for leadership positions."*	*Institutional, Culture*	*Institutional, Sexism*

P8	*"The industry is dominated by men, and all the rules of engagement are created and managed by them, so there is no form of forcing change as those at the helm are the custodians of change. Work environment and institutional barriers go hand in hand as one barrier easily influences the other. "*	*Institutional, Culture*	*Institutional, Lack of Recognition*
P9	*"Processing in academia to Professor level tends to be unfair on women as certain rules are not in black and white, and they seem to have gender preference or bias."*	*Institutional*	*Institutional*
P10	*"…Colleagues who thought black woman leadership is a taboo, they thought I was put in the position due to blackness and gender."*	*Taboo, Gender*	*Lack of Recognition*
P11	*"As a woman, it is expected that you need to perform as double compared to men..."*	*Double compared to men*	*Lack of Recognition*

The results in Table 2 illustrate that the lack of recognition is a considerable barrier experienced by women in the institutions. Five out of eleven participants perceived it as a barrier and that their efforts and hierarchical positions were not taken with the gravity required. An additional challenge identified by the participants was a culture of sexism within the institution, which impedes women from achieving managerial positions and impedes their work when they achieve leadership positions. The challenge of sexism becomes a driving factor around the recognition challenges that the participants have experienced, and the participants comment on the nature of male dominance within their respective departments.

4.2.2 Theme 2: Succession planning for women in leadership roles

The theme of succession planning for women in leadership roles investigates the perspective of women in the institutions concerning the availability of training and development geared to preparing women to attain leadership positions in various organisations. The following sub-theme is identified, the perspective of women and mentoring.

4.2.2.1 Subtheme: Perspective on succession planning for women in leadership roles

The training and development become critical in facilitating skills transfer that enhances the ability of the staff to rise into leadership. Table 3 provides quotes from the participant regarding their perspective on succession planning:

Table 3*: Participants perspectives on succession planning for women in leadership roles*

Participants	*Succession*	*Key Words*	*Succession Theme*
P1	No	*" There is staff and development policy in place that does not fully support previously disadvantaged groups ...There is not succession policy in place to alleviate that in institutions."*	Lack of Development and Training
P2	No	*"I think effective training is lacking across the gender, not only for women."*	Lack of Development and Training, not Gender Specific
P3	Yes	*"Women in Stem is a good example of uplifting women leaders."*	Development and Training
P4	Yes	*"A lot of emphases is placed on Women in STEM and various opportunities offered by my university to develop leadership skills and practices."*	Lack of Development and Training

R5	Yes	*"There are opportunities to apply for training and development….It has not been based on gender."*	Development and Training, Not Gender Specific
P6	Yes	*"The university does provide training programmes and opportunities for women to take up leadership positions."*	Development and Training
P7	No	*"Universities do not conduct training programmes specific to educate and prepare women for leadership positions. Women-to-women support groups are also lacking in higher educational institutions. Women work in silos to climb the leadership ladders."*	Development and Training, Peer Support
P8	No	*"The policies are not necessarily designed to cater for women promotion but any gender in the role…… it's definitely lacking."*	Lack of Development and Training
P9	Yes	*"No need for women only required training as both men and women …are equal …as the selection committee was fair to either gender."*	Development and Training
P10	Yes	*"… You compile your Personal Development Plan,….Suffice to say there are sufficient training."*	Development and Training
P11	Yes	*"Women forum, an organisation dedicated to empowering women, is doing a lot in training women on various skills…."*	Development and Training

The results presented above describe four out of eleven participants who noted that there is insufficient training and development geared to women that enables them to ascend into leadership positions, as illustrated by Figure 2.

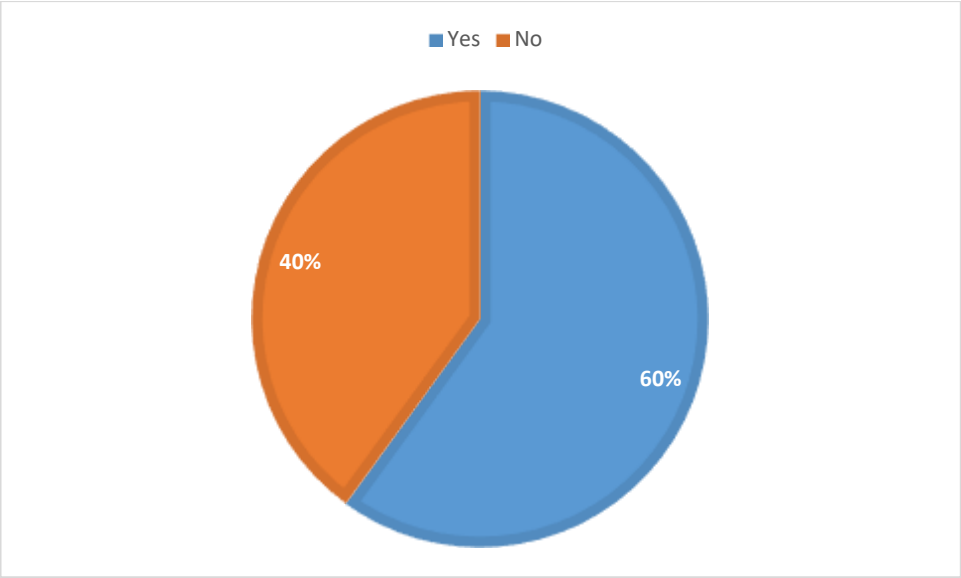

Figure 2: Participants Responses on the Perceived Succession Planning

Table 3 exemplifies that the remaining seven out of eleven participants explained that there are training and development programmes available to usher women into leadership positions. Although most participants acknowledged that there are training and development programs in place, they claim that the programmes are also gender-neutral and are part of a larger succession plan. This was demonstrated by participants seven and nine mentioned, ("*Universities do not conduct training programmes specific to educate and prepare women for leadership positions. Women-to-women support groups are also lacking in higher educational institutions. Women work in silos to climb the leadership ladders*." P7) ("*No need for women only required training as both men and women …are equal …as the selection committee was fair to either gender."* P9).

Furthermore, participants expressed that stem is a good example which offers women opportunity in leadership. Thus, from the sample, it can be ascertained that there is a culture of institutions providing training programmes; however, some participants indicate that there are issues of adequacy (i.e., that the programmes are sufficient for them to be placed in leadership positions).

4.2.3 Theme 3: Mentoring

The theme of mentoring is a critical component of the succession planning process. This is since members of the staff are provided with guidance and support to assume leadership positions. This subtheme investigates the perceptions on the impact of mentoring in attaining leadership positions. The results illustrate that only three participants (six, seven and eight) find the role of mentoring has a significant impact on empowering women, such as to ascend into leadership positions within their respective institutions. For instance, participant six said: "I feel it impacts a great deal as mentoring, etc., may inspire one and provide encouragement and moral support when needed."

Participants indicate that there is a definitive impact of having mentoring within the institution. This what participant six said, "*I feel it impacts a great deal as mentoring, etc., may inspire one and provide encouragement and moral support when needed"*. In addition, participants two, four and nine also indicate that there are no explicit mentoring programmes that are included within the institutional culture. The three Participants (five, ten and eleven) indicated that although the mentoring system is available at their respective institution as part of the organisational culture. The Participants do not stipulate their own perceived impact on the process of facilitating professional growth, which allows for leadership development, consequently, the ascension to the key leadership positions. A narrative that suffices in the analysis is that the onus is placed on the individual to seek mentors. It is not specifically the institution that should foster it in some explicit form.

Table 4: Participants perspective on the significance of mentoring

participants	*Mentoring & Succession*	*Key Words*
P1	*"No of these impact its other forces such as policies and cultures that are in place to hinder the impact of women in leadership"*	No impact
P2	*Not stated*	n/a
P3	*"Not significant"*	No impact provided by networks and mentors

P4	*Not stated*	n/a
P5	*"In my work environment, there are many resources at the disposal of women academics. This includes mentors and sponsors."*	Available, no stipulated impact
P6	*"I feel it impacts a great deal as mentoring, etc., may inspire one and provide encouragement and moral support when needed."*	Significant impact
P7	*"This used to be a problem but not currently. Even though women do not take conscious decisions to encourage and support others to apply for leadership roles, their heading higher offices are inspirational."*	Significant impact
P8	*"It does affect a whole lot like a lot of young men whom you find in a leadership position at a very young age in the life and career life's is because they were afforded leadership guidance at an early stage in their careers."*	Significant impact
P9	*Not stated*	n/a
P10	*"This depends on the individual …. And associate herself with successful women who will then mentor."*	Available, no stipulated impact
P11	*"In some areas, mentors are required, and women themselves must make an effort of getting relevant for themselves."*	Available, no stipulated impact

4.2.4 Theme 4: Policy Interventions to eliminate the identified challenges.

The theme of policy interventions to eliminate the identified challenges seeks to assess the impact of the current existing employment equity policy that is geared to improve gender representation in key decision-making positions within the institutions. Therefore, the sub-theme identified is policy implementation.

4.2.4.1 Sub-Theme 1: Policy implementation and diversity

The participants were asked to comment on the current policy implementation and if the existing policies are adequate to meet the diversity agenda. 50% of the participants stated that the current policy could be bolstered by additional policy to achieve diversity in the leadership positions. For example, participant seven mentioned, "*Employment Equity policies are beginning to encourage the selection of women in leadership positions*".

This is an instrumental aspect of the study as the implementation of policy, mainly at the micro-level of the institution, is critical for the realisation of the macro-level policy of employment equity.

The participants, however, do not stipulate as to which level the policy additions should be formulated, with the finding that the DHET policy and oversight has been sufficient in remedying the existing diversity challenges in management. Thus, from the policy interventions aspect, the executive management is cited to be central to the development and implementation of the policy.

In addition, six out of eleven of the participants indicated that the current policy implementation is more adequate, which reiterates that the management in the respective institutions has implemented their respective diversity policy. However, participant one, five, eight and nine have noted that the executive management has not sufficiently applied the existing policy framework to improve the representation of women in leadership positions.

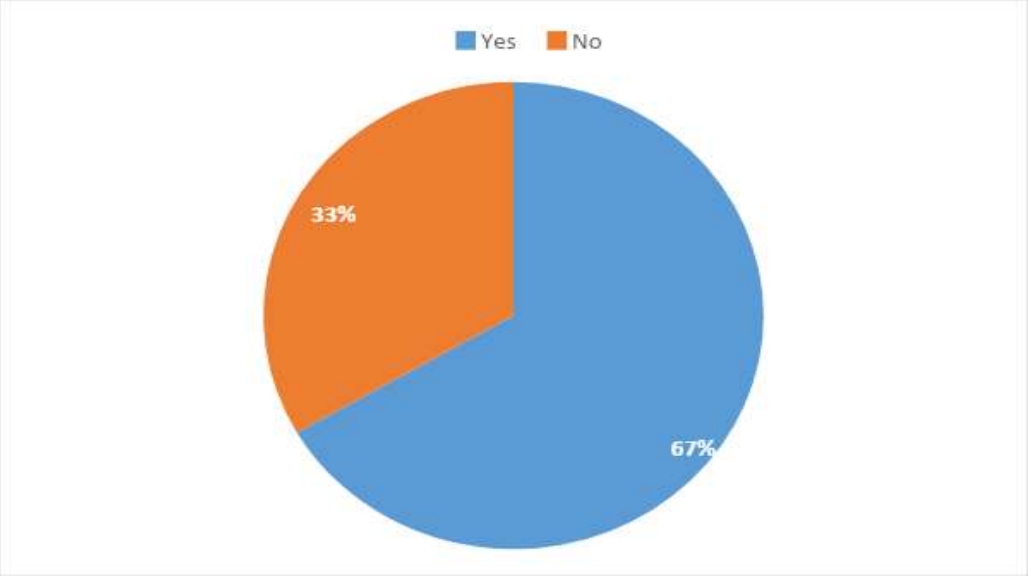

Figure 3: Participants Perception of Policy Implementation

Table 5: Policy perceptions of participants in HLI

Respondent	*Policy Requirement*	*Key Words*	*Policy Theme*	*Policy Implementation*	*Key Words*	*Policy Theme*
P1	Yes	*"Yes, there is a need for policies to be in place ……help enhance the visibility of women leadership."*	Current Policy insufficient	No	*"The policies are there; however, the executive management does not fully implement them."*	Poor Implementation
P2	No	*"My understanding is that its role is minimised as women are usually sufficiently represented"*	Current Policy sufficient	Yes	*"I am not fully aware of the policy – but I do see a good number of women holding executive positions in the university"*	Good Implementation
P3	Yes	*"There is a need for an additional policy which speaks to other aspects such as women with disabilities occupying leadership positions…"*	Current Policy insufficient	Yes	*"Some universities are headed by women Vice-Chancellors which indicates that indeed there has been a shift in the implementation of diversity policy"*	Good Implementation
P4	No	*"In my opinion, it is helping. No additional policy is required."*	Current Policy sufficient	Yes	*"Significant involvement of women in leadership positions in EBIT – this has improved since I had joined the EBIT management in 2012."*	Good Implementation

P5	No	*"No, I do not believe there is a need for an additional policy."*	Current Policy sufficient	N/A	*Not Stated*	N/A
P6	Yes	*"Yes Most Definitely"*	Current Policy insufficient	Yes	*"Yes, it has."*	Good Implementation
P7	No	*"Employment Equity policies are beginning to encourage the selection of women in leadership positions. "*	Current Policy sufficient	Yes	*"There are talks and policies to increase diversity in selections. Yes, even though slow, the implementation is increasing the inclusion of women in leadership positions. "*	Poor Implementation
P8	Yes	*"DHET needs to enforce such policies and have a way to measure."*	Current Policy insufficient	No	*"Policies are there that's inclusive of diversity, but there is nothing that is also there as measure and how to enforce them, so they could just be there for compliance."*	Poor Implementation
P9	No	*"DHET is not involved in the women in leadership in higher education institutions. The department does not describe that there should be women*	Current Policy sufficient	No	*"In my opinion, women are represented well at the management level, and women are able to rise up in the institution"*	Good Implementation

		in leadership and in which way or form."				
P10	No	*"No need it suffices"*	Current Policy sufficient	Yes	*"It has enhanced the inclusion of women in Management"*	Good Implementation
P11	No	*" They (DHET) needs to provide more bursaries….. As mentioned a policy is not enough to influence change but its enforcement is crucial"*	Current Policy sufficient	No	*"…Development needs to be inclusive not only focused on young ones but older generations may need reskilling too"*	Poor Implementation

It is noted that the implementation is impeded by measurable performance parameters that the respective participants can identify. Seven of the eleven participants agree that the current existing framework is sufficient to achieve the diversity agenda of the institutions. For example, participant eight mentioned, "*DHET needs to enforce such policies and have a way to measure*". In addition, the participant also raises that the existing DHET framework and policy directive is sufficient; however, supervision or oversight is required by DHET such as to realise the diversity objectives of the HLI's.

4.3 Concept Mapping

The following chapter will look at the current linkages identified in the participants and the relations between the various concepts within the framework. A conceptual mapping is a visual methodology that allows for the representation of information or themes derived from other methods that include oral and visual narratives (Striepe, 2020). Striepe (2020) notes that this analysis technique allows the researcher to create relationships from the information obtained from interviews.

The concept map was used to consolidate the current thematic analysis, which is central to the study. In addition, it provides insights into how the identified themes contribute to the ascension of women into strategic leadership positions. The concept map is provided below in Figure 4.

The concept map depicts the relationships between the various concepts and themes. The themes, as well as thematic analysis, is described by subsection 4.3 of the study. The themes find that executive management positively impacts policy implementation and the reduction of barriers to women attaining leadership positions. Policy implementation is critical to the concepts, as adequate policy can reduce the barriers experienced by women and conversely improve succession planning and create a platform for mentoring within the institution.

Mentoring also depicts a negative relation to barriers, as adequate mentoring can impact removing barriers and raise the number of women that attain experience in leadership positions. The identified barriers are an impediment to women rising into leadership positions. These barriers are illustrated to be reduced by policy

implementation, proactive executive management, and mentoring policy and framework.

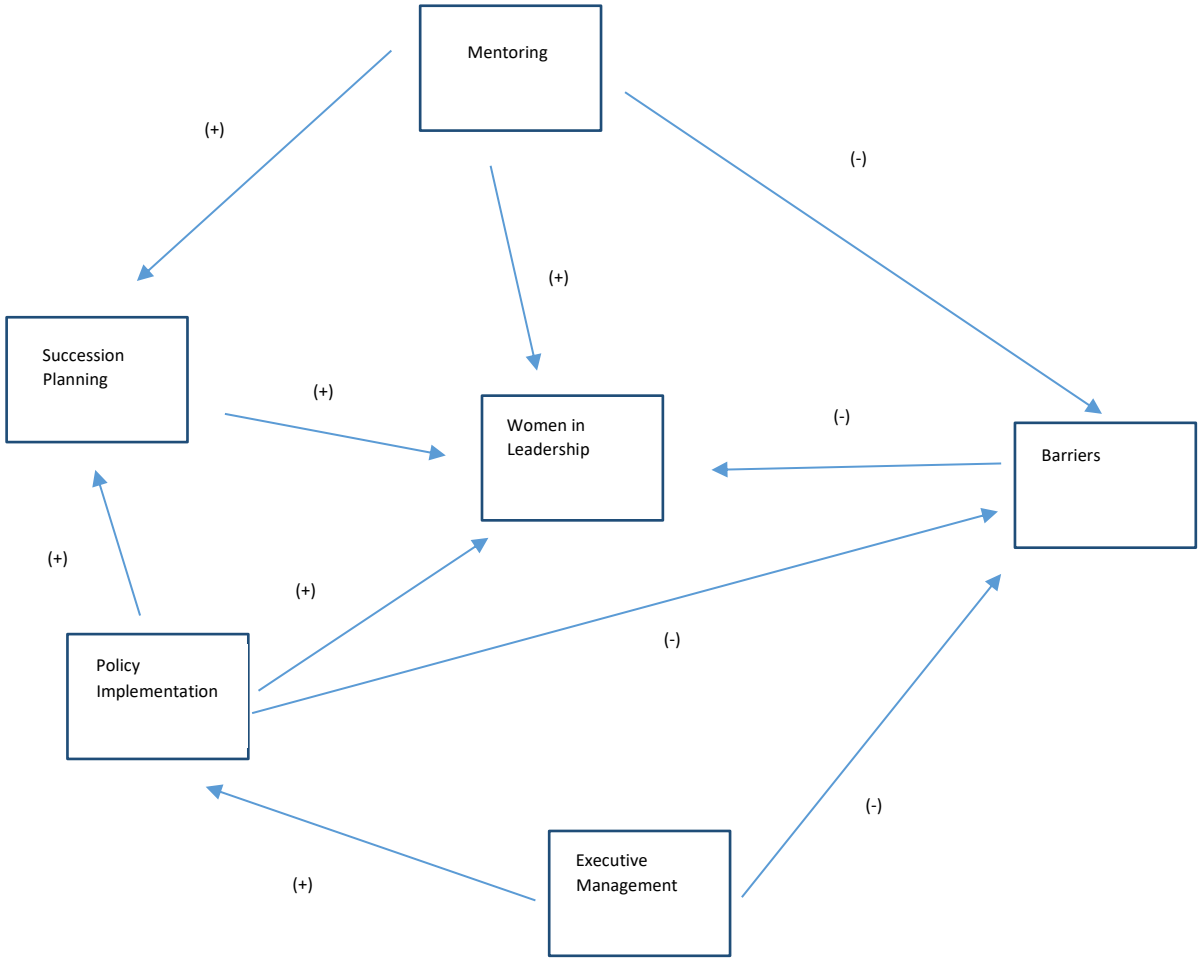

Figure 4: Concept Map of the Analysis Themes

4.4 Chapter Summary

The chapter reviewed the data analysis and illustrated key themes identified that impact the diversity structure in leadership, most significantly, for women in Higher Education Institutions. The results presented in this chapter depict that woman experience barriers into leadership positions although mixed concerning their origins; what is definitive is the role of the organisational management and the existing policy. The current policy is stated to be sufficient to establish diversity in leadership; however, participants believe that the barriers, including sexism, continue to detract from the strides made by women in the HLI's.

5 DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

The following chapter of the study will provide an overarching discussion of the results presented in the findings chapter. The various themes have been investigated and provide a comprehensive assessment of the challenges experienced by women in leadership in the context of Higher Learning Institutions. The researcher evaluated the barriers, policy dimensions of development and policy implementation gathered from the respondent's responses.

5.2 Themes

The following theme will deliberate on the results concerning the research questions. The researcher aims to review the results and findings that support the persistence of barriers for women in attaining leadership positions in Higher Learning Institutions.

5.2.1 Identified visible women in policy and operational structures.

The results presented in *Figure 1* and *Table 2* indicate that most participants can identify the visible barriers. The types of barriers found from participants are Institutional, Lack of Recognition, and sexism within their institutions and their respective journeys to management. The results also indicate that there are still policy challenges that have impeded the improved representation of women in leadership. The participants have stated that after they attain the leadership positions, they are not being recognised or taken seriously by their colleagues or subordinates. Although not a barrier to attaining management, it is a considerable barrier when the period of consideration for promotion arises. This is a principal challenge as women have conceived that the magnitude of effort that is required surpasses that of their male counterparts.

This illustrates the magnitude of barriers that are experienced within the work environment. The institutional culture is a perceived barrier that impedes the progression of women into leadership positions. Sexism is noted as a contributor impediment for women into leadership positions. These barriers for women consequently disenfranchise them from attaining positions in leadership, as per Figure 1. These cited barriers are consistent with the Gender Inequities findings of Ballenger

(2010), whereby the participants in the study raised the gender inequities as impediments to attaining leadership positions, and the results indicate that the inequities persist.

5.2.2 Succession planning for women in leadership roles

The policy that is adopted within the institution is important to the diversity policy of the institution itself. Executive management is central to the development and implementation of policy. Concerning the institution's succession policy, the executive sets the environment for the execution of institutional policy, which is inclusive of training and development. The training and development is a significant contributor to the development of leaders within any organisation. These phenomena are not disjoint to HLIs. The results show that the institutional culture and the proactive work of the executive management are significant to the empowerment of women leaders in the HLI environment. Consequently, HR policy that seeks to raise the representation of women within executive positions in HLI seemingly fails to address the historical bottlenecks and attaining gender diversity within a management structure is easier than bringing about equity.

The themes presented in the findings chapter illustrate that training and development have an indissoluble impact on policy development and leadership succession. The linkages come from the fact that the succession policy is an institutional policy implemented by the executive management. These linkages are found to be significant with Klein (2018). The executive management would form a type of equity committee or structure tasked with creating career opportunities for women, such as enhancing diversity. Gender equity originates from the legal framework for which equity is related to equality or explicit congruence. This is equality in responsibility, position, and remuneration (Bailyn, 2003). Equity also refers to equal opportunities and the equal ability to advance these opportunities (Bailyn, 2003). The theme of Succession is reviewed in the analysis and investigates the staff's level of training and development. The results indicate that most of the participants have indicated that their respective institutions provide training and development geared to the development of leaders.

The succession theme is inclusive of the fact that mentoring is a critical theme in the literature that enables and propagates the inclusion of women into decision-

making, critical and frontier positions that can innovate their organisation. The results illustrated that the participants were able to identify the significance of mentoring (3 out of 11 participants) as important. Furthermore, given the fact that the participants have indicated that the institutions have included mentorship programmes, these results differ from the findings of Ballenger (2010). The difference comes from creating mentoring structures by the institution and management to provide guidance; such formalisation indicates the proactive nature of management in enhancing the diversity in management.

This is indicative of the significance within their respective diversity policy context. The analysis and the results have illustrated that the mentoring policy is not a blanket policy as previously assumed. Mentorship programmes are almost a niche within institutions, with multiple participants insisting that the programmes are voluntary and that it is individualistic (it was up to the individual to choose whether they would voluntarily participate).

5.2.3 Policy interventions to eliminate the identified challenges

The dimensions of policy in the study can be separated into the development and implementation aspects. Concerning policy development, the current policy, the participants articulated that the existing employment equity policy in their institution was sufficient to promote the emergence of women into senior and managerial positions. Zhuwao et al. (2019) identified the workplace treatment of women as an indication of the absence of equity. The authors bring forward issues such as sexual harassment within the HLI workplace to indicate that representation does not indicate equity (Zhuwao et al., 2019).

The policy is well implemented, depicted in Figure 3. It provides an adequate platform to catapult women into leadership positions as it removed the identified barriers and was stated as meritorious. Although some of the participants believed that the existing policy was not sufficient, their grievances could be potentially attributed to the speed of implementation within their institutions, as stated by participants.

This details the fact that the outcome of the policies will suffice. There is a degree of time that cannot be eradicated and is consciously measured by the participants.

Interestingly, a participant noted the fact that the diversity policy has an additional dimension of age which consequently excluded women of a specific age from the succession and ascension into leadership positions if the candidate did not meet a particular age demographic. Contrary to this, gender diversity is centralised on the belief that all social groups need to be represented proportionally within the management structure of the HLI. An example of a policy is an affirmative action, which is misconstrued to achieve gender equality; however, it is an instrument of gender diversity (Zhuwao et al., 2019). Holistically speaking, the study participants asserted that the current policy by DHET and their institutions was sufficient for the development and deployment of women into leadership positions.

In addition, the policies were more than adequately applied by the executive management, such as to realise the diverse representation of women in leadership positions, most especially in strategic decision-making positions. Therefore, given the respective challenges posed, the existing policy and the methodologies implementation are found to be sufficient by the participants to realise the objectives of diversity within the leadership of HLIs.

5.3 Chapter summary/ conclusion

The results found that executive management has played a pivotal role in implementing diversity policy, such as removing these barriers. However, the participants have noted the fundamental challenge of the policies was not its framework but rather the speed at which it was implemented. In the following chapter, the researcher will discuss the recommendation, limitation, and conclusion of the study.

6 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Summary

In this chapter, the researcher will discuss a conclusion of the study, limitation encountered during the study, and the researcher suggests further recommendation for future research on this topic.

6.2 Conclusions

The study investigated barriers that impeded women from attaining leadership positions within their respected organisations of Higher Learning Institutions in South Africa. The investigation provided a literature review that demonstrated the challenges from the stance of Glass Ceiling Theory and complex issues experienced by women in their work environment. From the theoretical framework, the study approached the research questions using semi-structured interviews conducted on eleven participants, which voiced out the predominant, persistent barriers, namely the lack of recognition, gender inequities, and sexism. This is consistent with the barriers found in the Glass Ceiling theoretical framework persisting in South African Institutions.

The study similarly found that even the constructions of training and development programmes provided by the institutions such as the equipping of women to hold leadership positions. However, the findings show an absence of a mentorship programme in the institutions, whereas mentoring is acknowledged and found to be a significant tool for leadership development by the participants. In addition, the study found executive management has played a considerable role in the implementation of policy as well as the enhancement of the diversity policy through the creation of forums and committees.

The participants have raised difficulties in measuring the policy achievements; however, the increased representation of women in strategic leadership positions indicates improvement. Although limited by the sample size focussed on universities based in Gauteng as well as the truth value, the study consequently resolves that there are barriers that exist within the HLI's and are subsequently attended to by the executive

management gradually. Further studies can investigate how the implementation of the policy has accelerated the progression of women into leadership positions and explores the drivers behind the lack of mentoring in a case study approach. The studies can also be intended to extend the research to include other HLI's such as TVET colleges and assess the existence of the barriers in those institutions and the policy dimensions of development and implementation.

6.3 Limitations

- This study formed part of the researcher' Masters of Business Administration. Therefore, it is acknowledged that the sample size, the desired sample size, could not be attained due to the new norm covid-19 making it almost impossible to invade people's spaces literally.

- The study used a qualitative research approach to explore the experiences of women in senior positions.

- Notwithstanding the intersectionality of class, race and gender, it should be noted that in the selection of participants the only variable that was considered was gender pertaining to women in senior positions.

- The population of the study is limiting in the sense that those identifiable participants were hard to find with open calendars.

- The time allocated to collect data was not enough given the current times we are facing and securing interview appointments seemed almost impossible given the busy schedule of the participants.

- The process of collecting was also challenging because of the profiles participants hold. It was impossible to secure a meeting without being cancelled or participants simply missed the scheduled times, so I had to opt for an internet-based interview. Unlike face-to-face interviews, this provided difficulty to observe participant's facial expression and for the researcher to capture deep emotions.

- The study sample consisted of women only and it could be of value if future studies sampled a comparison group of male peers.

6.4 Recommendations

- Implementation of a prescribed succession program that promotes and recognizes women with appropriate credentials based on merit.
- The DHET to evaluate and monitor the implementation of the succession policy to ensure that women are promoted and recognized on merit.
- Training and workshops for women in leadership roles on mentoring, leadership, and management skills.
- Without exploiting women to prove themselves twice as much as their male colleagues, fair and equals measures should be practised in roles that are equally assigned to their male counterparts.
- Disable institutional cultures should be changed or disabled to accommodate and treat men and women equally.
- More research on women in leadership, with an emphasis on racism and sexism, is needed.
- Since the current study was small, more large-scale research is needed to ensure that the findings are generalizable.
- The study was limited to just HLI, further research should be conducted in FET and TVET colleges.

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8 APPENDICES

Interview Guide

Consent Form

Biography

Ethics Certificate

PAG Letter

Appendix 1.1: Data collection instrument(s)

8.1. Interview Guide

Date of Interview_____ Interviewer No_____.

SECTION A: SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENT

Please indicate your answer by ticking (✓) on the appropriate box.

1. Please indicate your age

18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
1	2	3	4	5	6

2. Please indicate your level of education.

Matric Holder	Undergraduate Student	Postgraduate student	Degree holder	Postgraduate degree holder
1	2	3	4	5

3. Please indicate ethnic background.

Black	White	Coloured	Indian/Asian
1	2	3	4

4. Please indicate the duration of your employment

1-3 years	4-6 years	7-9 years	+10
1	2	3	4

SECTION B: SEMI STRUCTURED QUESTIONS

Chisholm-Burns et al. (2017) and Marumo, 2016) have identified some challenges that women face in ascending leadership and managerial positions. Please briefly comment on how much the following challenges identified by these authors are applicable in the higher educational sector of South Africa.

1. As a leader in your respective department, how long did you take to get here? Was the length of time your decision, or determined by any forces?

……

……

……
……

2. Have there been any challenges or barriers in your journey to your current leadership position? If yes, please answer questions 3-11.

……
……
……
……

3. Briefly comment on the extent to which you think the challenges you have faced to hold the leadership position you are currently in are institutional or caused by the work environment towards women?

……
……
……
……

4. Do you believe that the institutional policies create incentives for women promotion to leadership positions in management? If not, which policies are the greatest hindrances?

……
……
……
……

5. From your experience, to what extent have the current human resource processes disqualified candidates, who are women? For example, could challenges come from the level of education required, lack of knowledge of the institutions' history and culture, relocation and work-life balance matters, etc.?

……
……
……
……

6. How much do you think the hindrance to promoting women or men to leadership or managerial positions is conscious or unconscious? Do you think women's biological characteristics can contribute?

……
……
……
……

7. Briefly discuss women's mentality or level of aspiration to ascend leadership positions. Do they think is a man's business or are they do not see themselves fit?

……
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8. Please comment on how much you think lack of mentors, role models, and sponsors impact on women taking leadership positions.

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9. Do you think policies in higher education institutions that support work–life balance (e.g., crèches and flexible working hours) in universities are adequate in supporting women to take up leadership positions?

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10. A “lean-out” phenomenon is a situation whereby women often take time off their studies or career to raise their children or address other family issues. Comment on how much this did hinder you or is hindering women to ascend leadership positions.

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11. How much have lack of internal and external networks, recognitions, opportunities, or resources hindered you or is hindering other women from attaining leadership positions in the higher educational sector?

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12. Comment on how higher institutions are including training and development that are gearing on bolstering women involvement in managerial or leadership positions? Do you think lack of training specific to uplifting women leaders is lacking in higher educational institutions? If so, how impactful do you think this is?

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13. The executive management is a critical driver of diversity in the workplace. Can you describe the level of development, over time, of the diversity policy as well as its implementation? Has the policy's implementation enhanced the inclusion of women in management?

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14. Please comment in the role of the Department of Higher Education and Training in helping or hindering the challenges experienced by women in leadership?

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15. From your perspective, how much is the current Employment Equity policy helping or hindering women in higher education leadership? Do you believe that there is a need for additional policy in your institution to enhance women leadership under this policy?

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16. Please comment on the extent to which institutional culture is creating hindrances in the advancement of women leadership in higher education.

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17. How much do you think operational structures impact women's ascension into leadership positions in the higher educational institutions?

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18. In all of the challenges you have commented on, which three do you think have been for you or are generally the greatest challenges women face to assume leadership/managerial positions in the higher educational sector?

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THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME

8.2 Consent Form

CONSENT FORM

Statement of Agreement to Participate in the Research Study:

- I hereby confirm that I have been informed by the researcher **NJ Qwelane**, about the nature, conduct, benefits and risks of this study - Research Ethics Clearance Number: **WBS/BA1768811/355**
- I have also received, read and understood the above written information (*Participant Letter of Information*) regarding the study.
- I am aware that the results of the study, including personal details regarding my sex, age, date of birth, initials and diagnosis will be anonymously processed into a study report.
- In view of the requirements of research, I agree that the data collected during this study can be processed in a computerized system by the researcher.
- I may, at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation in the study.
- I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and (of my own free will) declare myself prepared to participate in the study.
- I understand that significant new findings developed during the course of this research which may relate to my participation will be made available to me.
- I agree that the interview may be audio recorded
- I agree that the information I provide may be used anonymously after this project has ended, for academic purposes by other researchers, subject to their own ethics clearance being obtained.

Full Name of Participant:

Date:

Time:

Signature……...

Herewith confirm that the above participant has been fully informed about the nature, conduct and risks of the above study.

Full Name of Researcher: Nomsa Jean Qwelane

Date……. Signature……

Full Name of Witness (If applicable)…….

Date ……. Signature……..

Appendix 2.1: One-page bio of the researcher

Nomsa Qwelane is a mother of one who hails from the dusty streets of Mahikeng and Montshioa to be more precise. She is currently a Senior Finance Officer in a higher learning institution and managing the finances of a school that is one of the best performing schools in that faculty. She has a degree in accounting, completed SAICA articles, post-graduate diploma in business administration and currently an MBA candidate. She has worked in various organisation within the finance and audit divisions, which has seen her getting over 10 years worth of industry experience.

Nomsa's interest in women career progression and the study of the invisible glass ceiling theory started with her mother whom was a PL1 teacher for all her entire working life, even though her mother was the most qualified within the whole school amongst her colleagues (for the longest of time) and also hard working but she never received the recognition that she deserved and earned. Her mother played a pivotal role in shaping the young women and men that she taught in the small village of Lomanyaneng in the North-West province. To this day, they are always grateful for being the great disciplinarian teacher she was as they leave by the values instilled in them and the quality of teaching they received from her.

The study "Investigating challenges faced by women in obtaining leadership roles in HLI" was to help understand if indeed there is an invisible glass ceiling. Why is it still there post democracy, is it man made, who put it there, why do we still have it if its indeed man made, etc? The barriers women continue to face still. Why is it that when there is a woman deputy, as soon as the principal position becomes vacant then mysteriously a man comes from nowhere to assume that responsibility. Why is it difficult for women success such key and institution influential roles?

For Ms. Qwelane herself being in the HLI industry and witnessing certain unchanged patens, she saw it best to study about hers and other women's struggles within the industry.

Appendix 2.2: Ethic documentation - Ethics Certificate

Graduate School of Business Administration
University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

Wits Business School Ethics Committee
Constituted under the University Human Research Ethics Committee (Non-Medical)

Ethics Clearance Certificate

Ethics protocol number: WBS/BA1768811/355
This certificate is only valid with a legitimate ethics protocol number and signed by the Researcher (below).

Project title	Challenges faced by women in obtaining leadership roles in South African higher learning institutions
Investigator / Researcher	Ms Nomsa Qwelane
Nature of Project	MBA (Research Article)
Decision of the Committee	Approved unconditionally
Issue Date of Certificate	2021-02-19
Expiry date	Date of submission of the project report
Chairperson	Prof Anthony Stacey ☎ +27 11 717 3587 +27 82 880 4531 Anthony.Stacey@wits.ac.za

Declaration by Researcher

One copy must be signed by the Researcher and returned to the Chairperson of the Wits Business School Ethics Committee.

I fully understand the conditions under which I am authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee.

Signature

23/02/2021
Date:

Appendix 2.2: Ethic documentation - PAG Letter

UNIVERSITY OF THE
WITWATERSRAND,
JOHANNESBURG

Private Bag 3 Wits, 2050
Fax: 0270865535224
Tel: 02711 7173582

Reference: Ms Jennifer Mgolodela
E-mail: jennifer.mgolodela@wits.ac.za

18 February 2021
Person No: 1768811
PAG

Ms NJ Qwelane
1187
D M Kole Street
Montshiwa
2737
South Africa

Dear Ms Nomsa Qwelane

Master of Business Administration: Approval of Title

We have pleasure in advising that your proposal entitled *Challenges faced by women in obtaining leadership roles in South African higher learning institutions* has been approved. Please note that any amendments to this title have to be endorsed by the Faculty's higher degrees committee and formally approved.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Marike Bosman
Faculty Registrar
Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management