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Women in White-collar Work at the University of the Witwatersrand: A Comparison between Black and White Female Administrators

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Masters in Arts

Johannesburg, 2017

I dedicate this dissertation to my mother Grace Mabapa. I would not have been where I am today if it was not for you. Kealeboga mama!

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to thank my supervisors Edward Webster and Michelle Williams for their endless support throughout this journey. It was not easy journey but their continuous support and encouragement kept me going. I would also like to thank SWOP (The Society, Work and Development Institute) for not only funding my Master's degree but for the support and advice I received as an intern. Karin Pampallis especially you. For being a shoulder to cry on and for always being there to listen when I needed someone to talk you. To Shireen Ally, you might not know it but you are the reason I pursued this degree. You have always seen potential in me and you have never lost faith in me and for that I thank you. To my family, my mom, dad, sister, brothers and grandmother, I thank you a lot for your prayers and words of encouragement. And most importantly, to the female administrators who took part in this study, if it was not for you, this dissertation would not have been possible. I thank you for your time, honesty and trust you had in me. I appreciate you all.

ABSTRACT

This research report seeks to explore the experiences of women in white-collar work, particularly by comparing the experiences of black and white female administrators at of the University of the Witwatersrand. What this report illustrates is that both race and generational differences play a significant role in informing the experiences of the female administrators. A qualitative methodology was used to collect data for this report, particularly in-depth interviews to get "detailed information" about the participants' experiences, beliefs and thoughts. Three main generational groups have been identified among the Wits administrators: Baby Boomers, which is the older generation that is dominated by white female administrators; Generation X; and the Millennial group, which is dominated by black female administrators and consist of the younger generations. This research report thus argues that race has affected the workplace experiences of Wits administrators through generational differences. Furthermore, while generations share similar experiences and world views, they are not homogeneous categories.

Key Words

White-collar work; Women's labour force participation; Race; Generational difference; Intersectionality; Racial generations; Baby boomers; Generation X; Millennials

DECLARATION

I, Rosina Mabapa (student number 682040) am a student registered for Masters in Arts in Industrial Sociology in the year 2017. I hereby declare the following:

- I am aware that plagiarism (the use of someone else's work without their permission and/or without acknowledging the original source) is wrong.
- I confirm that the work submitted for assessment for the above course is my own unaided work except where I have explicitly indicated otherwise.
- I have followed the required conventions in referencing the thoughts and ideas of others.
- I understand that the University of the Witwatersrand may take disciplinary action against me if there is a belief that this is not my own unaided work or that I have failed to acknowledge the source of the ideas or words in my writing.

Signature (R.M. MABAPA) Date: 26 September 2017

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

#FMF	Fees Must Fall student movement
CAD	Centers tritech computers Aided Dispatch
HEMIS	Higher Education, Management, Information System
HR	Human Resources department
LAN	Local Area Network

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

I started this research with an interest in studying women in white-collar work, with my participants being black and white female administrators of the University of the Witwatersrand. My initial thought was that race was the key in determining the experiences of the women. I then realised that there are also generational differences that play a big role in understanding the work experiences of the administrators at Wits University. Their experiences can be characterised by an intersectionality of race and generational differences. "The intersectionality approach recognises the diversity of members within a category" (Dlamini 2016, 23). When relating intersectionality approach to my study, it means that the women who are part of this study are from different racial and generational groups but fall within the same gender category as they are all women. Race, gender and generational differences are in this case interlinked and together help explain the experiences of these administrators. I refer to this intersectionality of race and generational differences as *racial generations*.

In recent years attention has been given in to intergenerational differences in the workplace. Edward Webster (2017) argues that while generations may possibly share the same world view, they are not a homogenous group. In addition, this study shows how race has been an important factor in classifying the three generational groups (Baby Boomers, Generation X, and the Millennials) that I have examined and their experiences. Mannheim (1923) argues that factors such as historical periods and socio-cultural factors play very big role in shaping the experiences of each generation. I argue further that the experiences of these administrators at Wits were not only shaped by race and gender but also by generational differences. This research report will compare and illustrate the experiences of both black and white female administrators of the University of the Witwatersrand. In comparing their experiences, this report will proceed in the following manner. The following chapter, Chapter 2, provides an overview of the methodology I used to collect data and the challenges I encountered as

a young black woman who wanted to study white women. Chapter 3, which is the literature review, provides a historical analysis of the participation of women in the labour market both globally and in South Africa, followed by separate racial analyses of black and white women's workforce participation. This chapter also explores debates around labour process analysis as this report also seeks to unpack how administration work has changed over time. Chapter 4 then provides an overview of a day in a life of an administrator at Wits university, describing the work done by the interviewees and also how their jobs are graded using the Peromnes system. The chapter also looks at what the administrators regard as working outside of their job description versus what the Human Resources department (HR) suggests is actually part of their job requirements. Chapter 5 looks at the history of the concept of generation and how it is defined by sociologist Mannheim. This chapter also describes the different generations found in the workplace today, and the generations found among the administrators at Wits University. This chapter concludes with that the generational differences among the administrators are informed by race and that this is a result of the apartheid system. Chapter 6 explores the transformation of administrative work and how this links to the introduction of and transformation of new technology. It also looks at how technological change has impacted the different generations and how it has created both opportunities and challenges for them. The notion of deskilling versus reskilling due to technology is also discussed, together with a discussion of which generations have been deskilled and which groups have been reskilled by the transformation of technology. Chapter 7 then examines the difficulty for administrators to get promoted and thus how to a certain extent one could argue that the sector is characterised by a glass ceiling. This chapter also illustrates how the administrators demonstrate what Dawn Butler (1988) refers to as informal power in their work. This research report ends with Chapter 8, in which I argue that race has affected the workplace experiences of Wits administrators through generational differences, what I call racial generations. While generations share similar experiences and world views, they are not homogeneous. This study shows how race is crucial in shaping the responses of the three generations I have examined.

Both globally and locally, women have been denied access into the labour market. During both the periods of colonisation and apartheid, the South African government regarded waged work as reserved for men, and believed that women were more "suitable" for work within the domestic domain (Tshoaedi 2008, 59). During the early twentieth century, women, regardless of race, shared very similar attributes. They were "treated as dependents of their fathers and husbands, although in different socioeconomic contexts, their contributions to domestic life were paramount" (Berger 1992, 17). In essence, especially in a South African context, their experiences and economic positions differed across racial lines. Later in the twentieth century, more especially due to the growth of industrialisation in South Africa, the economy started opening up for women, but mostly for white women. At this point the majority of black women were still employed in the domestic sector. The industrial sector started opening up to black women only in the early 1950s, although only to a few of them. As the economy grew more in the 1960s and 1970s, more women were employed in formal work, although generally in unskilled jobs with very low wages which were dominated by black women. Till this day, poor black women experience the most exploitation, low wages, low work status, unemployment and the least job security. And on the other hand, white women are the main beneficiaries of affirmative action among women in the workplace, as many white women increasingly acquire managerial, professional and associate positions.

Most studies on women's labour force participation in South Africa compare white women in professional occupations to black women in precarious and informal work. There is thus a gap in how race in women's labour force participation will manifest itself in a case where both black and white women occupy the same occupation in white-collar jobs. This research report seeks to bridge that gap.

The scholarly contribution I would like to make is to highlight the experiences of both black and white women white-collar workers. In this research I hope to challenge common assumptions about the subjective experiences (if any) of both black and white women in white-collar work and to contribute to the gap in literature that does not research women in the same occupational level of different racial groups. The research

question I seek to answer is: “In what ways do race and generational differences affect the workplace experiences of white-collar women workers at Wits University?”

Chapter 2

METHODOLOGY

2.1 Qualitative Methodology

During the process of data collection and in my attempt to get information about the experiences of black and white female administrators at Wits university, this research project used qualitative methodology to collect the data and to try understand the experiences of the administrators who participated in this study. My participants comprised a total of fourteen administrators from the University of the Witwatersrand. Out of the fourteen, six of them were white women who have been working at Wits for about fifteen to thirty years, whom I refer to as the Baby Boomers generation. Eight of the participants were black women who I refer to as the Millennials and Generation X.

The qualitative methodology was used for this research project, as it is based on the interpretation of the experience of the population under study, as well as the meanings that these experiences have. It is characterised by its purpose of trying to understand some aspects of social life and behaviours as well as the attitudes of the population being studied (Patton & Cochian, 2002). The qualitative research design is based on the interpretation of the experience of the population under study, as well as the meanings that these experiences have. This research design aims to understand its participants and their everyday experiences (Neuman, 2014) .

With regards to my research project about understanding the experiences of both white and black women white-collar workers in administration, this methodology enabled me as the researcher to get a rich and an in-depth understanding of the everyday experiences of white-collar female workers at the University of the Witwatersrand, as there is a clear focus on understanding the social life and the experience of the participants under qualitative research.

Understanding the experiences of my participants in depth was enabled because this methodology allowed me to spend a lot of time with most of these administrators and as a result gain their trust. This methodology also helped me identify that the overarching theme that defines and describes the experiences of administrative work at Wits University is the generational differences among the administrators. And this was achieved by getting in-depth information from the administrators about their experiences and history and thus being able to compare these experiences to conclude that there is a generational difference among the administrators at Wits.

Qualitative research is the most appropriate and valuable method for this research project as it helped me produce data and information based mostly on information given by the women. It also helped me to attach meaning to how the women understand their experiences as black or white female administrators, such as identifying their experiences and generational differences. The qualitative research design enabled me as the researcher to get a rich and in-depth understanding of the everyday experiences of the women under study as this methodology is an interactive process between the researcher, the participants and the environment. What was important for me as the researcher to note throughout the use of this methodology was to recognize and respect the fear that most of these participants had in telling me about some of their experiences, as well as the sensitivity of the participants, more especially when the topic of race was brought up. I had to ensure that they only talked about what they were comfortable in talking about. I assured them that I would maintain their anonymity as I write up my report.

2.2 Research Methods

The research methods I used for my study include both in-depth interviews to get detailed information from the female white-collar workers, and questionnaires to get descriptive data about my participants. In-depth interviews refer to a research technique that consists of "conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents to explore their perspectives on a particular idea, program or situation" (Boyce & Neale 2006, 3). In-depth interviews were useful in that they allowed for the

collection of "detailed information" about the participants' experiences, beliefs and thoughts, unlike in a semi-structured or unstructured interview where the information given might not be useful or detailed. In-depth interviews created a relaxed environment for the participants to provide personal but detailed information that might not be available in any other form of research method (Boyce & Neale, 2006). The questionnaires I used for this research were designed to get descriptive data about their race, gender, occupational title, level and grading of their job, how long they have worked at Wits and the method of transport that they use to get to work. I felt that this was important so that I would be able to get a sense of the demographical information about my participants.

I used in-depth interviews and questionnaires for all fourteen of my participants although not all in the same way, depending on the time and how comfortable my participants were in giving me certain information about their experiences and beliefs.

In-depth interviews allowed the participants to tell a detailed story about their experiences as white/ black female white-collar workers at the university and allowed me as the researcher to be subjective and provide a complex narrative of the information given. Their detailed personal experiences enabled me as the researcher to get an in-depth understanding of their thoughts and experiences about their racial experience. In essence, I collected unique, detailed and personal primary source data that I analysed and used creatively to give complex meanings and understandings to the research.

2.3 The Research Site

The University of the Witwatersrand was my research site as it is where my research participants work. I chose Wits because it has very diverse administrators in terms of race, gender and class. But my idea to compare both black and white female administrators in the same position and achieving that among administrators at Wits became a challenge. I interviewed six white administrators in total; they were of an older generation who had been working at Wits for fifteen to thirty years. The black administrators that I interviewed were eight in total and were from a younger generation

who had not been working at Wits for more than six years. The difference in generation based on race was not by design and happened to turn out like that. The initial plan was to get twenty participants in total, ten black female administrators and ten white administrators but due to time restrictions caused by the Fees Must Fall protests, fear to participate in this study and the lack of interest, I ended up with just fourteen participants. Among that sample, the participants turned out to be generationally different.

2.4 Sampling

Sampling refers to a limited number of cases or samples that a researcher selects from a large number of cases and "generalises the population" (Neuman, 2014, p. 246). The type of sampling that was used for this research report is the non-probability sampling which is usually associated with the qualitative methodology. One does not need to have a representative sample with non-probability sampling, and thus requires less technical methods compared to probability sampling. There are two types of the non-probability sampling that this research project made use of, namely, snowball sampling and quota sampling. Snowballing refers to a type of non-probability sampling where the researcher first identifies a potential research participant, then selects the other participants through referral from other participants. Through this process, I initially had one participant who then referred me to other potential participants and those participants referred me to still other participants.

The other form of non-probability sampling that I made use of is quota sampling. It requires the researcher to have predetermined categories in which the participants are placed, then to select specific cases "to reach a predetermined number in each category" (Neuman 2014, 249). Quota sampling is very useful as I had predetermined categories – white and black women in white-collar work (university administrators). I have used it to categorise specific administrative jobs in order to make the comparisons I needed to make. The short questionnaire I conducted also helped me in using the quota sampling in the most effective way.

2.5 Access

There are two ways in which I got access to my research participants. Firstly, I used the snowballing technique by going straight to my participants and getting permission to interview them and also asked for referrals to more participants. The second way I got access was through getting permission from the Registrar to conduct interviews at the University.

2.6 Limitations and Challenges of the Study

One of the biggest challenges I faced at the beginning of my study was the resistance I received from white female administrators to participate in my study. This research was conducted in the midst of a tense political climate in South Africa, when there were highly publicised cases of hate speech and racial discrimination. It was also a time when the Fees Must Fall protests of 2016 were at their height. All of the white women who refused to participate in my study alluded to these topics and mentioned that they were afraid that whatever they said would be interpreted as them being racist. What made it more complicated, I believe, was that I am a black woman, which made them more uncomfortable and less willing to trust how I would represent them in my study. This challenge made me realise my positionality in this research as a black young woman studying at Wits University who wanted to interview white women who feared to talk because they were afraid that I would represent them as being racist.

My hardest challenge to overcome was getting access to white female administrators who were willing to be part of my study. Getting white women to participate as a black female Wits University student was very difficult after getting rejected by the white women I approached initially. Having white women refer me to other white women really helped me to get at least six white women to participate in my study. I also had to ensure that I guaranteed that they would remain anonymous and that the information they give me would be used only for academic reasons.

Another challenge at first was finding administrators of the same level from different races. There is a generational gap that exists among the administrators from the different racial groups that I could not avoid. The initial plan was to get administrators from the same level of occupation from different racial groups so that the comparisons could be adequate, but what I found was a gap informed by race.

But despite all these limitations and challenges, I was able to conduct and finish my research.

Chapter 3

THE RISE OF WHITE-COLLAR WORK AND THE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN THE LABOUR FORCE

3.1 Chapter Overview

This literature review will explore the participation of women in the economy as well as how and when white and black women started participating in the labour force, both globally and in South Africa. This will help the reader in the following chapters when the entry and the experiences of women in clerical work will be introduced and explored. The literature review has the following structure: It will start with an explanation of white-collar work according to C. Wright Mills, then introduce the concept of "women's labour force participation". A historical analysis about the participation of women in the South African labour force will follow, with a separate racial analysis of black and white women's workforce participation. The chapter will end with debates around the labour process analysis as my paper seeks to unpack racialised experiences of administrators at Wits University as well to understand how administration work has changed over time.

3.2 White-collar Work

The female administrators who are part of this study are white-collar workers, and this section seeks to unpack what is meant by the concept white-collar work. According to C. Wright Mills, the rise of white-collar work in the nineteenth century disturbed the expectation of how society ought to be during that time, which was simply a division between entrepreneurs and wage workers (Mills 1959, 29). White-collar workers represented at that time (and arguably even today, globally) what people aspired to be. Mills goes on to argue that the rise of white-collar work is "rooted in occupational change due to recent growth in and dependence on bureaucracies, technological change and in the increasing need to market the goods of industrial society" and as a result have

been alienated from themselves and their work (Mills 1959, 29). White-collar workers tend not to be organised due to the nature of their work and their dependence on bureaucracies for their existence. The author also argues that there is much we can learn about modern societies by looking at white-collar work. We cannot understand white-collar workers, Mills (1959) argues, without understanding the historical and present structures in which they are formed and in which they interact, which this research project seeks to do. As will be seen in the chapters that follow, administrative work is characterised by growth and technological change as mentioned by Mills (1959), and the job itself has become highly departmentalised and dependent on bureaucracies. The experiences of the administrators interviewed are informed by these characteristics of white-collar work but at the same time highly informed by the history of women in South Africa and how they came to participate in the South African labour force, as will be illustrated in the section that follows.

3.3 Women's Labour Force Participation

Women's labour force participation is a concept that conceptualises the entry and increase of women in the labour force globally. This concept will be used to shape and conceptualise my literature review and to help unpack the experiences of women as they entered the labour force. It refers to the participation of women in workplaces and positions that were not previously available to them. Women's participation in the labour force has had positive implications as it meant that more women moved up the social and economic ladder, exited poverty and ensured the well-being of their dependents. This greater participation was made possible by access to adequate skills and education, and opportunities within and outside family units. But at the same time, as argued by Berger (1992, Casale & Posel (2002, Kenny (2004), Orr & Van Meelis (2014) and Tshoaedi (2008), many debates around this topic have shown that there is "little evidence that this [women's labour force participation] is associated with women's increased mobility (move freely) in the labour market" (Casale 2004, 13). The rise of women's labour force participation in South Africa, more especially during the mid-1990s has also been characterised by the rather slower rate of increase of male

participation, leading to an increasing visibility of the concept of "feminisation of labour" (Casale 2004, 13).

During both colonialism and apartheid, South African governments regarded waged work as reserved for men, and that women were more suitable for work within the domestic domain (Tshoaedi 2008, 59). During the early twentieth century, women, regardless of their race, shared very similar attributes. They were "treated as dependents of their fathers and husbands, although in different socioeconomic contexts, their contributions to domestic life were paramount" (Berger 1992, 17). The role that women played in the formal economy was very minimal; in most cases they sought formal work or were located in formal work outside of domestic work in situations where they were faced with "economic depression, widowhood, war, low male wages, drought or in the case of black women, discriminatory laws, forced them out of their customary dependency either on the land or on male incomes" (Berger 1992, 18). In essence, women's economic position differed "across racial lines" (Berger 1992, Casale & Posel 2002, Kenny 2004, Orr & Van Meelis 2014, Tshoaedi 2008). Although domestic labour was reserved for all women in general, jobs in shops or cafes were reserved for white women.

What we also find in the early twentieth century, more especially due to the growth of industrialisation in South Africa, is the economy opening up for women, but mostly white women. At this point a few black women were employed in domestic work with the majority of them restricted to the rural areas. The industrial sector started opening up to black women only in the early 1950s "although this was still limited" (Tshoaedi 2008, 60). The reason for this increase of black women in the industrial sector, although minimal, was due to the shortages of labour. As the economy grew in the 1960s , there was still a shortage of skilled workers, which led the government to not only encourage the employment of more black men in jobs designed for white men but also the employment of more black women in unskilled jobs. By the 1970s about 25 per cent of black women were employed in the industrial sector but mostly in occupations regarded as women's work such as "food processing, footwear, clothing and textile industries, domestic service and agricultural sectors" (Tshoaedi 2008, 61). These occupations were

not only regarded as women's work but also characterised by low skills and very low wages. Black women earning the lowest wages of all workers, including white and black men, coloured men and women and also and white women. This illustrates that wage differences were not only based on gender lines but racial lines too.

The apartheid government in particular created policies which subjected women's employment, particularly that of black women, to "capitalist notions of the division of labour" (Tshoaedi 2008, 59). What this entailed was the separation of work between the domestic work (reproduction and household maintenance) mostly associated with women, from the capitalist production work which is mostly associated with men. In quoting Standing, Sende & Weeks (1996), Tshoaedi argues that there is evidence that suggests that employers would rather employ men in skilled jobs, and would rather train them as well. A survey conducted in 1995, a year into democracy, shows that of the total women employed in the workplace, only 23 per cent of them received training and necessary skills. "South Africa, in the midst of transformation, is struggling to overcome the burden of race, class and gender-based inequality inherited during the periods of colonialism and apartheid" (Kehler 2001, 41). Post-apartheid South Africa illustrates a dramatic increase in the feminisation of labour but, as will be illustrated below, women's labour force participation in contemporary South Africa has proven to have benefited white women more than black women.

Before the 1960s, the research conducted about "women's economic role" was assumed to be unimportant. It was only after the 1960s that social science researchers took seriously the role of women in the workplace. It was during World War 2 that the world saw a growth of female participation in the labour force. The period after the 1960s also saw the growing recognition of women as workers. With the growth of the feminisation of labour, women were focused in particular jobs, namely: clerical work, semi-skilled factory work and semi-skilled domestic work (Dex 1985, 6). In analysing the growing employment of women between the years 1960 and 1980, Shirley Dex (1985) compares employed women in the United States (US) and in Britain. With regard to Britain, there has been a great increase of women employees, growing from 6.7 million in 1948 to 9.2 million in 1980. At the same time, there was a decrease of male employees from 13.3

million to 12.8 million. By the 1980s British women constituted 41.7 per cent of the total workforce, whereas they had only constituted 27 per cent in 1918. What was particularly striking about the data from Britain is that the majority of women employed were employed in part-time work. Thus the period from 1961 to 1980 saw an increase in part-time work and a decrease in full-time work. Dex (1985) argues that the increase in part-time work in Britain has led to the growth of women's jobs, predominantly in service and public work.

As compared to the women employed in Britain, female employees in the United States are more likely to be employed in full-time work. Whereas in Britain, women between the ages of 30 and 40 are more likely be employed, women between the ages of 20 and 30 in the US are more likely to be employed. American women are more likely to be employed as professionals or teachers due to the sex discrimination suits laid against large companies. And lastly, the unemployment of British women has been proven to be less than that of British men, whereas it is quite the opposite in America (Dex 1985, 5).

3.4 Black Women's Participation in the Labour Force in South Africa

Makgetla (2004) argues that one cannot understand the position of women in the economy if one does not take racial differences into account. In this section, I focus on the participation of African women in the labour force in South Africa.

South African societies remain characterised by the interrelationship between race, class and gender. Black women in South Africa have the highest level of unemployment, have the lowest status in the workplace and occupy some of the most insecure occupations (Orr & Van Meelis 2014, Kehler 2001). In comparison to white women or black and white men, poor black women in South Africa have the most severely limited access to resources, education and opportunities. African women are not only the poorest in society, they also face productive and reproductive responsibilities and face the burden of being "subjected to discrimination and subjugation both in and out of their families" (Kehler 2001, 45) Orr and Van Meelis (2014,14) illustrate that although there are more women now who participate in the South African labour force than at any

other time in history, women are most likely to work as "domestic workers, clerks, sales and service workers". Black women are thus mostly likely to take up work as domestic workers and cleaners, while white men dominate management and professional occupations, and black men dominate manufacturing, artisanal and elementary occupations. Black women in "professional occupations tend to be in teaching, social work and administrative work" (Orr & van Meelis 2014, 32). It was only in the 1980s and the 1990s that black women increasingly pursued tertiary education. The black women who were able to get into tertiary institutions were mostly limited to nursing and teaching schools, "while only a small percentage underwent courses in mathematics and technical skills" (Lues 2005, 107). There have been improvements in the positioning of women in the economy but black women are still the most subordinated in these occupational positions.

This section has shown the history of the participation of black women in the labour force. The following section will explore the history of white women's participation in the labour force.

3.5 White Women's Participation in the Labour Force in South Africa

The majority of the literature about women's labour force participation in South Africa has focused on black women and their lived experiences in the workplace as well as at home. Very little literature exists about the experiences of white women in the labour force, and this section seeks to close that gap.

Women's labour force participation was meant to be of benefit to all women in South Africa as it was meant to represent the increase of the participation of women in the workplace but as can be seen above, it did not quite achieve that. One of the measures taken by the newly democratic South African government to address the imbalances of the past was to implement Affirmative Action to ensure fair representation in the workplace and prioritise black people and women who were previously disadvantaged. Daniela Casale (2004) suggests though that Affirmative Action has seemed to benefit white women more than black women. In analysing the period from 1995 to 2001,

Casale argues that there has been a significant increase in the number of white women in managerial, professional and technical positions. There are hardly any white women in the lower-skilled occupations, as most of them work as clerks or as associate professionals. What was most striking to find was that most of the self-employment among white men and women is in the formal sector while most of the self-employment of black men and women is in the informal sector, showing how race manifests in inequality (Casale 2004, Leibbrandt, Woolard McEwen & Koep 2010). White women also earn more than African women and, relative to white men, their positions and conditions seem to be improving. In her analysis of the South African retailing sector, Bridget Kenny (2004) argues that the 1970s represented a shift in the labour market, as more black women replaced white women as shop workers. And as a result, this shift represented more deskilling and devaluing of the retailing industry (Kenny 2004, 15).

Ironically, Tamar Copeland (1989), in her piece ”White Women in South Africa: An Inferior Gender within a Superior Race”, argues that “because of the social and cultural situation in South Africa, white South African women have had a unique experience in their struggle to come to terms with their image of self and their options in life” (Copeland 1989, 5). She goes on to argue that the country’s repressive history did not only “impede the development” of black South Africans but also those of white women as well. Deborah Posel (1997, 51), in her analysis of South Africa’s labour relations during apartheid, mentions that although not the same, both black and white female South Africans were the last to be considered when it came to paid work; priority was given mostly to white male Afrikaners.

Thus it is fair to argue that although women benefited from greater labour force participation, not all women are equally advantaged or disadvantaged by it. White women seem to dominate highly skilled occupations, while black women dominate unskilled and informal work. But it is also important to realise that this was not always the case. During both apartheid and colonial times, although not equally, both black and white women were oppressed and discriminated against and were the last to be considered for paid work in comparison to white Afrikaner men. But then again, “the difference between black African women and white women is far greater than the

difference between black African women and men" (Orr & van Meelis 2014). There are multiple reasons for the arguments presented above, namely: lack of adequate education, lack of access to resources, lack of adequate skills, marriage and fertility rates (Kenny 2004, Orr & Van Meelis 2014, Casale 2004, Casale & Posel 2002).

The most intellectually convincing aspect from the literature above is that race played a very big role in defining the experiences of these women, as will be seen with the administrators discussed in the chapters that follow. The experience of women's participation in labour is not the same among all South African women, as it is experienced through differences in race and class. Poor black women experience the most exploitation, lowest wages, lowest work status and the least job security. This intersectionality of race and class not only embodies the conditions in the South African labour force but also reflects the conditions present in South African society at large, with poor black women having the least access to adequate education, skills and resources, limiting them from accessing many of the opportunities accessed by white women.

The empirical gap identified throughout this literature is the lack of studies that compare white and black women's experiences in the same occupational strata of white-collar jobs. Most studies have been around the participation of women in the labour force in South Africa leading to white women in professional occupations and black women in precarious and informal work. There is thus also a gap in how race informs the participation of women in the labour force in a case where both black and white women occupy the same occupation in white-collar jobs. And in illustrating the data found on administrators at Wits university, this research report will attempt to fill that gap.

The following section focuses on labour process analysis that will later inform the labour process of administration at Wits.

3.6 Labour Process Analysis

As this research report seeks to unpack the female administrators' racialized experience at work and the transformation of administrative work, it looks specifically at the debates around the labour process which will be used to explain the experiences of these female administrators of Wits University. The labour process of administrative work has changed throughout the years, more especially with the entry of women and the introduction of new technology. This section will help us understand what labour process is and how the concept has developed over time to explain the labour process of administrative work at Wits.

The Marxian concept of the "labour process" was re-introduced into the study of work by Harry Braverman in his book, *Labour and Monopoly Capital*. Braverman (1974) used this concept as a critique of capitalist production. "He shifted attention towards the production of surplus value. Expanded surplus value production, he argued, depends on progressive erosion of worker control over the labour process" (Spencer 2000, 2). There are two main themes that Braverman highlighted – firstly, deskilling through the introduction of Taylorism, and secondly, the control and alienation of labour through the system of scientific management – both of which have resulted in the "denial of consciousness and purpose of labour under capitalism" (Spencer 2000, 2). The labour process analysis here focuses on the division of labour to increase production of goods to generate profits.

From the 1980s onwards there emerged a second wave of study of labour process analysis and its reconsideration, as highlighted by Paul Thompson and Chris Smith in the book *Working Life: Renewing Labour Process Analysis*. This second-wave study includes works by Edwards (1979), Friedman (1977), Littler (1989) and Burawoy (1979), as well as Thompson himself. This wave also included a new generation of feminists who argue that Marxism was gender-blind. The critique of Braverman's labour process analysis was that it was rather limiting and excludes other factors affecting work life (Spencer 2000, 13). Friedman (1977) agrees that workers are subjected to direct control, but also argues that there is a limitation to direct control as

there is responsible autonomy among the workforce (Kitay 1999). Edwards' (1979) understanding of the labour process includes "technical control and bureaucratic control found in the long career ladders and elaborate rule books of large corporations" (Kitay 1999, 1). Burawoy (1979, 27) argues that the relationship between management and labour is not only about conflict and control but also about consent. "Consent is expressed through and is a result of the organisation of activities" (Burawoy 1979, 27). Littler (1989) sees labour process analysis through Weberian terms of bureaucracy and legitimisation. Littler argues that the labour process analysis needs to be complex and include three levels: job design, the structure of control and the employment relationship. "These levels have a degree of independence and allow for mixed strategies to be employed, linking to Burawoy's idea of inclusion of consent" (Kitay 1999, 3).

Outlining and discussing the different ways in which various authors explain the labour process analysis will assist this research project in obtaining complex understandings of the labour processes among the women in administrative work. This is especially so because the labour processes of administrative work have changed greatly throughout the years with the introduction of new technology and the domination of women in the sector. When looking at the change in administration work, one can agree with Braverman (1974), Friedman (1977), Buroway (1979) and Edwards (1979) that there seems to be a large degree of control in administration work. Armstrong (1983) and Butler (1998) state that new systems and new technology have offered management more ways to control the labour process. Butler (1998) goes on to argue that with computers, management is now able to get exact statistics on the production that takes place and is able to get information from the different work stations. These computers can even detect what is said and what the computers are being used for. This research report also agrees with Braverman (1974) and Burowoy (1979) that the labour process has, through the introduction of technologies, led to deskilling as argued by Armstrong (1983) and Butler (1998). Armstrong (1983) argues that the introduction of new technologies has enabled the employing of lesser skills at low wages. But this dissertation will argue further on that both deskilling and reskilling have occurred as a result of the introduction of new technologies in administration work.

The literature review has provided a historical analysis of the participation of women in the South African labour force. It has shown how both white and black women participated in the labour force in South Africa and globally, and also how the experiences of women in the labour force differed across racial lines. This dissertation attempts to fill a gap by comparing the experiences of black and white female workers at the same level of occupation. This literature has also explained the labour process analysis, as it will inform the labour process of administrative work at Wits University.

The following chapter will introduce the administrators who participated in this study with a brief profile of how they are characterised as support staff by Wits University, It will also provide a description of their jobs and the work that they do by providing a brief introduction into the day in a life of a Wits administrator. The chapter will look at the system Wits University uses to grade jobs and how administrative jobs are graded and at which levels. The chapter will then end with a focus on the administrators' argument that they usually do work that is outside of the job description in comparison to Wits University's policies regarding their job polices.

Chapter 4

WORKING AS AN ADMINISTRATOR AT WITS

4.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter provides a glimpse into the life of an administrator at Wits University. It describes the work done by the administrators interviewed and how their jobs are graded using the Peromnes system. This chapter also looks at what the administrators regard as working outside of their job description, and what HR suggests is actually part of their job requirements.

4.2 Two Broad Categories of Employment at Wits University

There are two broad categories of employment at Wits University, namely academic staff and support staff. Academic staff include professors of various levels, lecturers and researchers who are in charge of the core business of the university such as teaching, research and publishing academic articles. Support staff, on the other hand, are non-academic staff such as administrators who assist in different ways to ensure that the university's activities run smoothly. They play a very critical role to ensure that the university functions efficiently and reaches its academic objectives.

All jobs at Wits, including academic and administrative jobs, are graded using a system called the Peromnes system. The reason for this is to determine the worth of the job, its size and its importance in relation to other jobs at the university.

4.3 The Peromnes Grading System

According to the information provided by the Human Resources division at the University of the Witwatersrand, jobs are graded through a job evaluation process. Job evaluation refers to the "rating of jobs according to the specifically planned procedure

in order to determine the relative size and worth of each job".[1] It examines the requirements of jobs and measures them according to a standard procedure. This then results in job grades, scores, levels or ratings which are compared to other jobs that have also been evaluated. The process of job evaluation assists in fitting people to the job and it also helps determine the correct paying rate for the job. The benefits of using this system includes the fact that it assists in the recruitment and selection process, it helps to determine the training that is required for that job, and it assists in organisational development and collective bargaining.

The Peromnes system is used by the University and many other companies to grade jobs and put them in specific categories. Several factors are fed into the Peronmes grading system to determine the "worth" or level of the job. These include the level of decision making required for that particular job, experience and qualifications. Based on those factors, it will be determined whether the job is at administrative, skilled, professional, management or executive level. Raju (1998) highlights three aims for the Peromnes job evaluation method. The main aim is to "determine the intrinsic worth of jobs based on systematic assessment of job content and requirements, independently of remuneration and without regard to the qualities and performance of the individuals who perform the jobs" (Raju 1998, 109). The other aim is to compare jobs in relation to one another in terms of their worth and create a complexity of jobs and a structure within that company or organisation. The system also ensures that there is rational remuneration within the company and that the rates are appropriate for the employees and the job itself.

There are six factors that are considered by the Peromnes system when jobs are graded and placed into specific categories. The six factors include evaluating if whether the job includes problem solving responsibilities and if the job involves making very complex decisions and judgements. The system also looks at the consequence of the judgments made at that level of the job, looking specifically at how the decisions and judgements made at that level will impact the organisation. The peromnes system also evaluates the amount of pressure that a job has and the time that is available to do the work; and also the level of knowledge that an employee is required to have in order to perform their job

[1]Human Resources document provided by the University of the Witwatersrand about job evaluation.

is also evaluated. The level of impact that the job has in or outside of the organisation is also evaluated as well as the comprehension which is the last factor, that means if whether the requirement of the job is to understand written and spoken communications. These six factors are summarised in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Six factors that determine how jobs are graded using the Peromnes system

	Factor	**Description**
1	Problem solving	Evaluates nature and complexity of the decisions, judgements and recommendations made in the job
2	Consequence of judgements	Evaluates the impact of accountable decisions and judgements on organisational levels, inside and out the organisation
3	Pressure of work	Evaluates the amount of pressure of the job in terms of variety and type of work done and time available to do it
4	Knowledge	Evaluates the level of knowledge required to perform the job competently
5	Job impact	Evaluates the influence or impact that the job has on the activities of parts of the organisation or outside the organisation
6	Comprehension	Evaluates the requirement of the job to understand written and spoken communications

Information for this table was provided by a Human Resource representative of the University of the Witwatersrand.

The six factors mentioned above help determine the level and grading of jobs at Wits University. The lower the grading, the higher the position. For example, the Director and the Registrar of the University are graded at level 3, which means that their jobs are at a high position in the University and that their responsibilities, pressure, scope of job, the impact that their decisions have on the organisation and their remuneration are much higher than an Administrative Officer who is graded at level 10. The Director and the Registrar have some of the biggest responsibilities in the University, as the Director is in charge of the strategic management of the whole division within the University and the Registrar is in charge of all academic activities and administration of the University. A Principle Administrative Officer who is graded in the middle at level 6 is responsible for having knowledge of strategic objectives of the organisation or functional area in the

University and for developing a plan to support them. Administrative Officers who are graded lower than a Principle Administrative Officer, on the other hand, fall under one of the lowest categories of the University, level 10, as their jobs entail routine applications of knowledge and thus have less pressure and responsibilities compared to the other jobs mentioned above. A summary of how jobs are graded at Wits is illustrated in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Examples of job grades at Wits

Grade	Title	Scope of job
3	Director	Strategic management of the whole Division within the University.
3	Registrar	Responsible for the academic admin within the university.
4	Director	Strategic management of a section in a Division. This section must span the whole University.
5	General Manager	Decisions made impact on the University and are strategic in nature.
6	Principal Administrative Officer	Knowledge of strategic objectives of the organisation or functional area and development of plans to support them.
7	Senior Administrative Officer or Manager	Interpretation and implementation of objectives set within the discipline or functional area.
8	Senior Administrative Officer	Devising and implementing systems and processes within a functional area.
9	Administrative Officer	Application of knowledge/specialist skill as a result of training/experience in a non-prescribed work routine.
10	Administrative Officer	Application of knowledge in a fairly prescribed work routine.

Information for this table was provided by a Human Resource representative of the University of the Witwatersrand.

4.4 Brief Profile of Support Staff and Wits Administrators

Table 4.3 shows the different types of administrators found at the University of the Witwatersrand and their headcount. The categories of the administrators included in this research study are shown in **bold**.

Table 4.3: Types of administrators found at the University of the Witwatersrand and their headcount

Count	Type of administrator		Count	Type of administrator
403	**Administrator**		107	Hemis administrator
57	Administrator: communication and events		1	HR administrator
10	Administrator: finance		39	HR administrator/coordinator
9	Administrator: human resources		79	HR administrator: library
93	Administrator: teaching experience		26	HR Senior administrator/coordinator
17	Archives administrator		32	HR & student administrator
56	**Assistant administrator**		135	Human resources administrator
52	Assistant research administrator		22	IT administrator
208	CAD administrator		12	Junior LAN administrator
53	CAD: senior space database administrator		820	LAN administrator
93	Capital programme administrator		57	Marketing administrator
36	Case centre & IB tours administrator		58	Network administrator
87	Community site administrator		666	**Office administrator**
1357	Data administrator		39	Office administrator/finance
216	Database administrator		21	**Office administrator/receptionist**
90	Data & info system administrator		722	Operations administrator
139	Finance administrator		7	Operations administrator: hospitality
18	Finance project administrator		105	Operations management administrator
65	Finance & projects administrator		10	Postgraduate administrator
45	Financial administrator		29	**Postgraduate &research administrator**
18	Financial aid administrator		41	Procurement administrator
248	Programme administrator		6	Senior project administrator
424	Project administrator		9	Short course administrator

26	Project administrator/leader		29	Senior administrator: HR & procurement
54	Project centre finance administrator		49	Student administrator
23	Project finance administrator		90	Systems administrator
417	Public relations administrator		91	Systems and network administrator
33	Receptionist/office administrator		108	Technical administrator
140	Research administrator		30	Vendor administrator
60	Resource centre administrator		57	Venue allocations administrator
2262	**School administrator**		31	Web administrator
1182	**Senior administrator**		9	Wits e-system administrator
31	**Senior administrator: academic programme**		71	Workshop administrator
96	Senior administrator: operations		62	**Senior programme administrator**
24	**Senior course administrator**		34	Senior payroll administrator
277	Senior database administrator			
368	Senior LAN administrator			
32	**Senior office administrator**			
106	Senior operations administrator			

Information for this table was provided by a Human Resource representative of the University of the Witwatersrand.

The administrators that took part in this research include Personal Assistants to the Head of Department and Secretaries (Grade 10), Senior Administrators (Grade 8), Administrative Officers (Grade 10), Administrative Assistants (Grade 10) and Faculty Officers (Grade 9). The administrators who work as Personal Assistants to the Head of Department and Secretaries mentioned that their job descriptions and thus a day at work essentially consists of serving as a support person to the Head of School and ensuring that the department functions properly. Their responsibilities include organising meetings and diaries, assisting in organising functions such as guest speakers, typing letters, booking venues for meetings and functions, taking minutes and sending them out, organising catering and answering phones. They describe their job as having to adapt to what their bosses are doing. For example, they assist the Head of School when they publish articles, do research, attend conferences and assist students lectured by their bosses. According to the document provided by the HR at Wits, their job is graded at level 10 and their job requirements include record keeping which requires general

secretarial duties. The application of knowledge in this type of a job is in a fairly prescribed work routine.[2]

The Senior Administrators mentioned that their roles are essentially to ensure that all administrative functions for the school or department run smoothly. Their days include ensuring that equipment such as printers are working, and that the right classrooms and exam venues are booked. Like PAs and secretaries, they also ensure that the Heads of Schools have the support they need, but they are more student and academic centred. They also support lecturers and students. They organise meetings and take minutes for those meetings. According to the Wits HR document, senior administrators are graded at level 8, and their job requirements include advanced knowledge of administration systems and advanced problem solving. The scope of their job includes devising and implementing systems and processes within a functional area, interpretation of rules, standing orders and application in a non-standardised environment.[3]

Administrative officers and assistants have rather similar roles and are a grade or two below Senior Administrators. They do not only carry out support functions for the department but also support Senior Administrators. Their responsibilities include capturing students' marks, ensuring that text books are ordered and delivered on time, that course packs and course outlines are printed and that students receive all the materials needed for their lecturers. They also support lecturers in terms of ensuring that they have everything they need to do their work, and also assist them with their publications and making arrangements to attend conferences. Although all the administrators mentioned above work with students, it is Senior Administrators, Administrative Officers and Administrative Assistants who work very closely with students. In most cases, their relationships with students go further, into a more personal relationship, where they help students with food, assisting them with clothes to attend university Gala nights or dinners, or just simply "giving them an ear" when they want to talk about their progress and troubles that they face, both personally and academically. According to the Wits HR document, this job is graded at level 9 or 10 depending on

[2]Human Resources document provided by the University of the Witwatersrand.

[3]Human Resource's document provided by the University of the Witwatersrand.

the specific job descriptions. If they are at level 9 their job requirements include having varied work and fairly complex problems. Their scope of job includes an application of knowledge or specialist skill as a result of training or experience in a non-prescribed work routine. And if they are at level 10 their job requirements includes general administrative/secretarial jobs.[4]

Faculty officers on the other hand work specifically in Faculty Offices and deal with issues relating to a student's path from registration to graduation, assisting students with the changing of courses, amending their registrations, and submitting research proposals for example. Unlike the other administrators, they do not work alongside lecturers or professors but only work with students and faculty as a whole. According to the Wits HR document, their job is graded at level 9 and their requirements are to deal with a variety of work and solve fairly complex problems that involve the application of rules, for example when dealing with students in a Faculty. Their scope of work and how decisions are made is through an application of knowledge or specialist skills as a result of training in a non-prescribed work routine.[5]

4.5 Working Outside of Job Descriptions

Most of the administrators who participated in my study, black and white women from all generational groups, complained that their work includes doing tasks outside their job descriptions. As mentioned above, administrators play a very critical role in the functioning of the departments in the university. Administrators perform a range of tasks to ensure the organisation functions efficiently. They play a role as the go-between as they work with and communicate with almost everyone who gets involved in the department or faculty.

One of the Faculty Officers mentioned that they are required to work at a call centre once every month for a full day. She mentioned that it is a problem because they have all this paperwork to do and applications to process. They have to be at the call centres

[4]Human Resource's document provided by the University of the Witwatersrand.

[5]Human Resource's document provided by the University of the Witwatersrand

to answer questions about other faculties, whereas she does not even know how their entrance points systems work. She mentioned that September is usually the biggest problem because they have a lot of applications and submissions coming through and graduation lists to prepare. The Faculty Officer argues that the time spent at the call centre could be used to do her actual work. She said that there is always work to be done, a lot of it, and argued that:

> Even when you want to go on leave, you think twice before going because when you come back you will regret it. When you open your emails your inbox will show you. Some will be sorted; most you will have to sort out yourself because only you will know how to solve it (Participant 1).[6]

But doing work that is outside of their job description is not always a bad thing for these administrators. As mentioned above, for most of the administrators interviewed, the work that they do involves interacting with students, some more than others. They often find themselves assisting students both academically and personally, and sometimes find themselves coming in on Saturday to assist these students. For example, one of the secretaries mentioned:

> When these students have a lamp lighting ceremony[7] it is not in my job description to set it up but I do it. It is not in my job description to work on Saturdays to make sure students are sorted but I still come. My job is the normal secretary's job description, answering phones and setting up diaries, you know, the general stuff. I want to see these students develop themselves so that they can be something big one day (Participant 2).

The quotes above from participants 1 and 2 are examples of administrators doing work that is outside their job descriptions, which essentially illustrates two different outcomes. The first quote is from a Faculty Officer who was asked to work at a call centre once a month; she perceived this as unfair because it took up a lot of the time that she did not have to do the work that is in her job description. Her job description includes doing physical work pertaining to a student's path from registration to graduation, assisting students with changing courses, amending their registrations and

[6] See Appendix for list of participants and their positions.
[7] A lamp lighting ceremony is a ceremony performed by Health Sciences students right before they graduate and start working. It is a symbol that they have completed that part of their journey in life.

submitting research proposals – not working at a call centre. The second quote also illustrates an administrator, specifically a PA to the Head of School, doing work that is outside her job description. Even though her job description is to organise meetings and diaries, typing letters, booking venues for meetings and functions, taking minutes and sending them out, organising catering and answering phones, this, the administrator perceives this as more acceptable because she is helping students, which she believes will contribute to their growth both personally and academically. This point also links to Dawn Butler's (1998) concept of informal power, which will be discussed in Chapter 7. In this case this administrator is exercising the power of being able to contribute to the success of the students she assists, assisting them in tasks that will help them graduate at the end, even though some of the lengths she goes to are outside of her job description.

When I asked one of the representatives from the University's HR division, she told me that working at a call centre or assisting students with their lamp-lighting ceremony is not entirely working outside of the job description. It is actually in line with the work that these administrators are required to do.

With regards to working at a call centre specifically, she mentioned that the questions are in fact aligned to the work that they do and are required to do. On a normal day, they work with applications and enquiries about the application and registration process, and the introduction of a call centre in their line of work is one of the various ways in which the University tries to make their work more efficient. The Faculty Officer sees this process as working outside of her job description but the HR officer sees as being in line with her work. The introduction of call centres was to make the job more efficient.

What the HR officer has said here seems to be more accurate than arguing that it is outside of their job descriptions. But what is also seen here is Braverman's argument about the labour process analysis that is presented above. This dissertation argues that Braverman's (1974) argument of control is applicable here as these administrators have no control over their labour. The administrators have no control over the introduction of new methods such as call centres, and as a result have no control over their own labour.

But even with the expression of their unhappiness at working outside of their job description, they did not hesitate in mentioning what they enjoy the most about their jobs.

4.6 What they enjoy the most about their jobs

I concluded all of my interviews by asking each of the participants what they enjoyed the most about working as administrators at Wits University. All fourteen of the participants said that the interaction with students and helping them was the best part about their jobs, and that is why most of them did not mind working outside of their job description. They highlighted that meeting students in their first year, watching them grow and progress and then watching them graduate at the end is what they enjoy the most about their job. And this is what all of the participants said, both white and black female administrators.

This chapter has described the work undertaken by the different administrators and provided an insight into a day in the life of a Wits administrator, both from their own personal perspective and according to the Human Resources division at the University. This chapter has also described how the jobs at Wits are described using the Peromnes system and how this system is defined. What is important to note is that although they are all categorised as administrators, there are different levels of administrators at Wits, as illustrated in Table 4.1. Although their roles and responsibilities as well as their experiences may differ based on their title, position, job requirement and grade, there are similar roles that they all undertake as administrators at Wits. This chapter has also shown that some of the administrators stated that they did work that is outside of their job descriptions. The HR department, on the other hand, disagrees that they work outside of their job description. This report agrees with the HR representative, that their work is actually in line with their actual job, but also argues that the introduction of work methods like call centres is an example of what Braverman (1974) argues when he says that the labour process is now characterised by a lack of control by the workers. This will be explored further in the chapter about deskilling versus reskilling.

The next chapter will introduce the overall theme of this dissertation, which deals with generational differences and how that is in essence linked to race in administration work at Wits.

Chapter 5

GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES

5.1 The History of Generational Differences

At the beginning of their book *Managing the New Workforce: International Perspectives on the Millennial Generation*, authors Eddy Ng, Sean T. Lyons and Linda Schweitzer (2012) start by quoting an ancient Arab proverb that states: "men resemble their times more than they do their fathers" (Ng et al 2012, xvii). They go on to argue that the "age-old notion that social change is embedded in value shifts from one generation to another has become something of a truism over time"(Ng et al 2012, xvii). The concept of generation is used widely in order to "make sense of differences between age groupings in society and to locate individual selves and other persons within historical time" (Pilcher 1994, 481). Words such as "my generation" and the "older generation", for example, are used to describe and locate such individuals. To describe individuals, we may speak of those who were born or grew up in the 1960s as the 60s generation, or we may speak of "a few generations ago" or the "the older generation" or even "the generational gap" (Pilcher 1994, 481). The development of the generations as a theoretical concept has a very long history in the field of Sociology. Karl Mannheim, in his 1923 essay 'The Problem of Generations", was the first to highlight the issue of generations in the field of Sociology. Jane Pilcher (1994, 481) argues that Mannheim's essay is regarded as "the seminal theoretical treatment of generations as a sociological phenomenon". She goes on to argue that "Mannheim's essay can be read as a text which contributes to our understanding of key sociological issues, in addition to 'the problem of generations', issues such as 'nature of time', 'the relationship between biology and the social, and the socio-psychological connections of language and knowledge" (Pilcher 1994, 481). The reason why Mannheim's essay is regarded with so much importance is because his analysis of generations as a concept is located firmly in socio-historical contexts and contributes to the sociological theory of knowledge. Mannheim argued that "individuals born within the same historical period

and socio-cultural context experience the same events and context during their crucial formative years, which provides them with a common inborn way of experiencing life and the world" (Ng et al 2012, xvii). In essence he argues that history and socio-cultural factors play a very big role in shaping the experiences of each generation. In Mannheim's (1923, 283) words, "generation is superimposed upon other, historical and cultural factors".

According to Mannheim,

> Contemporaneous individuals are further internally stratified by their geographical and cultural location; by their actual as opposed to potential participation in the social and intellectual currents of their time and place; and by their differing responses to a particular situation so that there may develop opposing generations units (Pilcher 1994, 483).

Mannheim goes on to argue that if there was no interaction between human beings, if there were no "definable social structure" or even history that has a sort of continuity, the generation as a social phenomenon would not exist. There would simply just be birth, ageing and death. Thus Pilcher (1994) argues that Mannheim and others have used "generation" in a cohort way. Cohort is defined as "people within a delineated population who experience the same significant event within a given period of time" (Pilcher 1994, 483).

5.2 Generations in the Twenty-first Century Workplace

In recent years more attention has been given to the intergenerational conflict in the workplace which was caused by the different age groups that are found in the workplace. Diversity in the workplace and among the workforce is not only characterised by race, gender, religion or ethnic background but also by generational differences (Gibson et al 2009). People from different age groups very often have different life experiences that when examined can offer very important perspectives into why they act or react the way in which they do.

Today, a number of generations can found in the workplace, depending on the demographic definitions that are used. Bruce Tulgan (2016) argues that there can be up to seven generations in a workplace. He identified the following generations:

- Pre Baby Boomers (born before 1946);
- Baby Boomers first wave (1946–1954);
- Baby Boomers second wave (1955–1964);
- Generation X (1965–1977);
- Generation Y first-wave Millennials (1978–1989);
- Generation Z second-wave Millennials (1990–2000); and
- Post-Millennials (2000–present) (Tulgan 2016, 2).

Three of these generations will be highlighted in this report: Baby Boomers; Generation X; and Millennials. Although there are specific characteristics that describe the specific generations, it important not to over-generalise as there are characteristics that might not define certain individuals within a generational unit.

5.2.1 Baby Boomers

Baby Boomers, unlike the pre-Boomers, grew up in a period of economic growth and prosperity, in a period of suburban affluence and when nuclear families emerged, with most households having stay-at-home moms. They got their name because of the massive increase in the number of births during this period in the United States; the numbers peaked in the late 1950s (Miller 2010). Boomers witnessed radical transformation and social change during their time period. "They emerged with strong beliefs in themselves and the ability to set and achieve goals". This confidence was influenced by having strong nuclear families as well as an increase in economic and educational opportunities (Miller 2010, 2). Birkman (2016) describes Boomers as being very ambitious and optimistic. Due to the economic growth that occurred at that time, most of them did not struggle to get jobs after they completed school. "They have ruled the workplace for years and are comfortable in the culture they created" (Birkman 2016, 5).

And when looking at the Baby Boomers within a South African context, this generation was exposed to a lot of political unrest and events such as the 1960 Sharpeville Massacre, the 1976 Soweto Uprising and the rise of "black resistance movements" (Jonck et al 2017, 3). This was also a period when the apartheid system was at its height, which meant that a lot of black people were banned from entering certain areas and were excluded from a lot of the formal paid work.

Birkman (2016) goes on to argue that they are a generation that will work longer than expected as most of them plan to delay their retirement. Technology has also played a very big role in their careers as they had to adapt to new technologies, which has been a challenge in some cases. The youngest members of this generation are around the age of 53 years old and the oldest is around 72 years old and in some countries such as America, they constitute the largest generation in the workplace (Birkman 2016, 4).

5.2.2 Generation X

The term Generation x was established by Douglas Coupland in his novel *Generation X: Tales of an Accelerated Culture,* and was at a later stage picked up by the media. The term was used to describe a "hard to find target market" (Miller 2010, 2). Coupland used the X as a symbol to describe an unknown value which searches for an identity that cannot be found. This generation grew up in social and economic turmoil and was highly influenced by an unstable economy characterised by competition. This generation was also influenced by television shows such as MTV and uncertainty around the HIV/AIDs epidemic (Jonck et al 2017, 3).

When Generation X started entering the workplace, they entered an environment that was dominated by the Baby Boomers. Baby Boomers occupied important positions of employment and contributed highly to the changing of institutions everywhere. That left Generation X workers feeling like they are outsiders in their workplace, and left them unsure about their futures and their role in the workplace. Due to these events they became very individualistic and independent as compared to the other generations. They

value work-life (family) balance more than the other generations and do not particularly trust their employers (Gibson et al 2009, 5).

But unlike the Baby Boomers, Generation X thrives very well in this ever-changing world as they have learned to adapt. This is because "they grew up with the notion that the only thing that is constant in life is change" (Jonck et al 2017, 3). They are very open to change and do not "find it threatening to work in a multicultural environment, where they will strive towards self-satisfaction and happiness" (Jonck et al 2017, 3). They are the first to grow up with computer and video games and are very techno-savvy. This has made them highly employable in what seems to be a saturated market. "Taking advantage of continuing and dramatic shifts in technology, they have become digital pioneers who value the attributes that technology offers, such as adaptability, user control and mobility" (Miller 2010, 2). Individuals in this generation are autonomous and they want equality, flexibility and input in how things are done. The youngest member of this generation is around 37 years old and the oldest is around the age of 52 years.

With regard to this generation in a South African context, this is the first generation influenced by "labour market regulatory codes such as the Employment Equity Act, Act 55 of 1998, and the Basics Conditions of Employment Act, Act 75 of 1997" (Jonck et al 2017, 3). In other words, this generation witnessed the transition to the inclusion of all racial and gender groups in the labour market without regulatory discrimination that was based on the one's skin colour or gender.

5.2.3 Millennials

Millennials, who are also known as Generation Y, are the youngest generation found in the workplace. They got their name through their connection to the new millennium, as they were the first group to reach adulthood in 2000. This generation has been labelled as "digital natives" because they have been part of the age of the Internet, technological innovations and social media since they were adolescents and even children (Ng et al 2012, 3).

Millennials represent about 40 per cent of South Africa's population. The "high-tech environment" that they grew up in has shaped their experiences and values in life, and as a result they are much more comfortable with how quickly the world is evolving in terms of information, technology and social media. Their experiences have allowed them to move a lot faster and become a lot more efficient because many things are at their disposal, such as searching for information on the Internet, sending text messages, watching videos on YouTube, and even taking videos and pictures and sharing them on the Internet, all of this from their cell phones (Miller 2010, 2). Herman Miller (2010) argues that Millennials tend to work very well in group settings and tend to perform well at work. Millennials "prefer office environments that offer choice, depending on the task at hand, and expect that such choice will be open, dependable work communities where knowledge is shared" (Miller 2010, 3). They entered a workplace that is highly competitive as it is still occupied by two other generations, and like the Baby Boomers they are generally optimistic and are used to facing challenges.

The youngest member of this generation is around 18 years old and the oldest is around the age of 36 years.

5.3 Generational Similarities and Differences at Wits

At the beginning of this research a questionnaire was conducted in order to get demographic information about the participants. It included questions about race, age, dependents, marital status, mode of transport to work, residential area, occupation title and level, and period of employment at Wits. With regard to age and race, out of the fourteen participants in this study, six were white women and eight were black women. Out of the six white female administrators, two were between the ages of 41 and 51 and four were above the age of 52. If we were to relate it to the generational units, two of the white female administrators belong to Generation X and the rest are from the Baby Boomers generation. Out of the eight black female administrators, five were between the ages of 30 and 40 years and three were between the ages of 41 to 51 years. This

means that all of the black female administrators who participated in the study belonged to Generation X and the Millennials.

What this research has shown is that there is a generational difference between white and black female administrators at Wits, where the white administrators form the older generation (Baby Boomers and a few from Generation X) and the black administrators are from the younger generation (Generation X and Millennials).

As will be illustrated further in this research report, there are both similarities and differences experienced by female administrators at Wits University, and most of their experiences are informed by the term racial generations. One similarity between all administrators from all racial and generational groups include that what they enjoy the most about their job is the interaction that they have with students and seeing them progress to graduation. Another similarity is that they argue that getting a promotion in their line of work is a very big challenge and that some aspects of the job are characterised by a glass ceiling. They argue that in order to get a promotion, one needs to apply for another post in a different department. Working outside of the job description is what all the administrators felt they experienced. Another similarity is their fear of losing their jobs due to the introduction of new technology and Fees Must Fall protests. They argue that the way in which technology is so advanced these days, academics will be able to do their own work using the new technology. The administrators interviewed also worry that if the Fees Must Fall protests do lead to free education, the university will not have money to hire them and as a result they will lose their jobs. The only difference in this case is that the Baby Boomers who are white women feel as if they will be the ones who get fired first before the younger black administrators because of policies such as Affirmative Action and Black Economic Empowerment.

Other differences include firstly, the willingness to talk to me about their experiences as administrators of Wits University. The black female administrators, who are from younger generations, were rather open to talk to me and had no problem disclosing any information about their working experiences, possibly because I am a black woman.

The older generation on the other hand, who are white women, were not at all willing to be part of my study and feared how their information would be perceived, as mentioned in the methodology section. It was only after the referrals that they were more open to talk to me but still restricting specific information. Another difference is the period in which they became administrators at Wits. It was first white women who started working as administrators at Wits; most of them have been working there for fifteen to thirty years. Most of the black female administrators started working at Wits at a much later stage and as a result constitute the younger generations namely, generation X and millennials generations. The reason for this, I argue, is because of the apartheid system that enabled white women to enter paid work before black women and granted then opportunities that were not available to black women until the change in labour policies in the late 1990s.

Willingness to change to new methods and systems is another difference between the generational groups. Most of the black female administrators from the younger generational groups argue that they are unable to implement new methods of doing work because they receive resistance from the older generation. They argue that it is because the white administrators have been working at Wits for a very long time and have as a result developed their own methods of doing the job, and it is rather hard for them to change them. As mentioned above, Generation X and Millennials adapt more easily to change than the Baby Boomers; they argue that the change in systems at Wits is rather slow for them. With regards to technology, when the Baby Boomers started working as administrators at Wits, they used electric typewriters, as mentioned by one of the white female administrators, but when the black female administrators joined Wits, they used computers. What the Baby Boomers complained about is the pace in which the new technology is being introduced, arguing that it is too fast, while the Generation X and Millennials argue that it is too slow as they feel they are techno-savvy. More of this argument will be seen in the next chapter.

As mentioned by Mannheim (1923), generational differences are influenced by historical periods and socio-cultural contexts. Historical events that have taken place in South Africa, such as colonialism and apartheid, have shaped a lot of the life

experiences of the generational units mentioned in this report. And as illustrated earlier on in the literature review, during both the periods of colonisation and apartheid, the South African governments regarded waged work as work reserved for men, and believed women to be more suitable for work within the domestic domain (Tshoaedi 2008, 59). During the early twentieth century, women, regardless of their race, shared very similar attributes. They were "treated as dependents of their fathers and husbands, although in different socioeconomic contexts, their contributions to domestic life were paramount" (Berger 1992, 17). But although South African women faced similar experiences, most of their experiences and economic positions differed across racial lines (Berger 1992, Casale & Posel 2002, Kenny 2004, Orr & van Meelis 2014, Tshoaedi 2008). Although all women were subjected to domestic labour, jobs in shops or cafes were strictly reserved for white women. Even with the growth of industrialisation in the early twentieth century, when the environment allowed women to enter the workforce, it was first white women who entered and at a later stage the economy opened up for black women.

The same seems to be the case for administration work as administrative and secretarial work has always been dominated by white women, with black women entering at a later stage. This has contributed to the generational differences found among the administrators at Wits. The majority of the white women have worked at Wits as administrators for fifteen to thirty, some even longer, and all the black women who participated in the study worked at Wits University as administrators for less than ten years and most for not even six years.

One of the white female administrators who has been working as an administrator for more than seventeen years said:

> I did a secretarial course when I was younger and I always knew that I am going to be a secretary because my mother told me so; there was no other option for me (Participant 1).

On the other hand, one of the black female administrators who has been working as an administrator at Wits for six years said:

> I studied Dramatic Arts here at Wits. That was in 1985. It was not possible for me to get a bursary at that time because most of them went to white people. It

> was difficult for me to get a bursary. Even though 90 per cent of my class were white and were on bursaries, I could not get a bursary. I could not afford to stay in varsity so I dropped out in my second year and I started working … I worked a lot in the NGO sector but on contract; this was the first permanent post I have had (Participant 2).

What the quotes above illustrate is that both black and white women had very limited opportunities to enter the workplace, but to different extents. The white female administrator entered the workplace first but was limited to study secretarial courses and work as a secretary. The black woman did not get the opportunities to further her studies and as a result had to settle for contract work; she only had the opportunity to enter the workplace in a permanent position in 2012. In essence the apartheid system limited all women from participating freely in the economy and the workplace, but the limitations were not the same. This apartheid system gave white women the privilege of entering and participating in the economy first before any other racial group , allowing for the Baby Boomers of white women to enter and dominate offices as administrators and secretaries and limiting black women of the same generation to work as domestic workers or in informal work such as brewing beer. It was only at a later stage when black women started entering office work, more especially when Affirmative Action policies and labour policies such as the Employment Equity Act of 1998 and the Basic Conditions of Employment Act of 1997 were implemented. What the apartheid system did in essence was to enable generational differences in terms of race to occur.

What this chapter has attempted to show was the history of the concept of generations and how it is defined by Mannheim in a sociological context; it also discussed the different generations found in the workplace. This chapter went on to show the different generations among the female administrators at Wits and how they are defined based on the definition and descriptions given above. This chapter has also shown the similarities and differences among the administrators in terms of race and gender. The chapter ended by concluding that the generational differences were informed by race, and this was a result of the apartheid system. As illustrated above, there are number of ways in which generational differences have impacted administrative work at Wits, and one of the ways is through the introduction of new technology into administrative work throughout the years.

The following chapter will trace the transformation of administrative work and the introduction of technology as well as how it has impacted the generational units of administrators at Wits.

Chapter 6

INTRODUCTION OF NEW TECHNOLOGY AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE WORK

6.1 Changing Technology and Generational Experiences

The introduction and development of technology in the workplace, especially in administration work, has played a big role in not only changing and defining the sector, as it will be seen below, but also in changing the experiences of administrators.

Birkman (2016) argues that the increase in technology has created a gap among the generations that exist today. Most of the Baby Boomer administrators, the white female administrators who participated in this study, started working as Wits administrators in the 1980s and early 1990s. The technological change that they experienced is rather different compared to the changes experienced by most of the Generation X and Millennial administrators who are mostly black women and who started working as administrators at Wits in the 2000s. Most of the Baby Boomers had to adapt their careers and experiences in the workplaces to the introduction of new technology. Most of the Baby Boomers recall using electric typewriters and dot matrix printers when they started working, which eventually changed to using computers. On the other hand Millennial and Generation X administrators mentioned that they used computers when they started work and only had software and other minor changes in features throughout the years.

More of these changes and the experiences of each generation in terms of technology will be explored further on in this chapter. But first, this chapter will trace and explore the transformation of administrative and clerical work and then the introduction and change of technology in administrative work both globally and in South Africa.

6.2 The Transformation of Administrative and Clerical Work

The global history of clerical and administration work is one that is characterised by a shift to the feminisation of work, as it is an occupation previously dominated by men. From the 1880s there was a huge increase in the recruitment of women into office work, "with the rate of increase accelerating in the decade or so before the First World War" (Anderson 1988, 2). Clerks were previously men who were employed in small but very strategic and important numbers "in the country-houses of the merchants and manufacturers as well as in the growing departments of the central and local government" (Anderson 1988, 3). And during that period most of the clerks were superior in their educational achievements and in their social background as compared to their colleagues. They were more educated and their personal traits of "loyalty, courtesy, honesty and sobriety, in a word respectability, were regarded highly by their employer" (Anderson 1988, 3). "The technical and organisational realities of the early offices ensured that such men filled positions of trust and could anticipate long careers ending in management" (Anderson 1988, 3). Given the fact that the office had very little technology, the skills of each of the clerks were well developed. One of the biggest and most important characteristics of office work then was handwritten communication between the firms, which was the responsibility of the clerks. Clerks who were most useful to the employers were those who were able to write business letters well. Organisationally and generally, the line drawn between clerical and managerial roles were not clear, of course considering that each individual firm had their own practices. Rosemary Crompton and Gareth Jones (1984, 14) argue that in the early nineteenth century most of the clerks were regarded as the "forerunners of modern management". "They carried out functions that we would now classify as managerial" (Crompton & Jones 1984, 14). These clerks did not just regard themselves as "trusted lieutenants to the captains of industry"; those who were more ambitious and determined wanted to eventually see themselves in the same class as their employers.

Before the 1880s clerical work, which was small-scale and male-dominated had clerks who were not troubled by any serious competition in the labour market. Then new opportunities emerged in the 1880s for women to become clerks, though they made

very little entry into offices reserved for men such as in banking, railways and the law (Anderson 1988, 5). Offices were getting bigger and more complex. This was partly because of the change in business organisation, for example the collaboration between companies in Britain and the US, but also because of the increase in takeovers and amalgamations. The office space featured more specialisation and divisions that resembled the developments that took place in the wider economy. Departmentalisation, which is the organising of the office into different departments, started to be adopted by the larger and more advanced offices. Another feature was the great emphasis on record keeping and communication. Office work was now characterised by an increasing workload and thus an inevitable increase in the size of the workforce at the office: "Office workers at the turn of the century faced a rising tide of information and documentation (Anderson 1988, 5).

Although there continued to be an increase in male clerks, employing them created a problem for the firms. Firms were no longer able to run on small resources as they had in the past and Boards of Directors exerted pressure to curb any rise in costs; this led to more women being hired into clerical work (Anderson 1988, 5).

Technical change was also linked to the feminisation of this mode of work. "Telegraphy and later telephony were vital in speeding up the transmission of information and led to the creation of armies of female office auxiliaries, but it was the type writer which revolutionised the production of documents inside the office" (Anderson 1988, 6). This now meant that there was a substitute for costly and time-consuming methods of writing by hand .It also meant that work processes were speeded up and that the demand for clerical output increased by reducing costs of clerical input. This was done by employing large numbers of cheaper but efficient female clerks. Shorthand, which has been there longer than type writing, also became an important skill and employers encouraged their clerks to acquire it. Clerks also saw it as an important skill in this "overstocked labour market".

As mentioned above, when the Baby Boomers generation entered the workplace as administrators, clerks and secretaries at Wits University, they only had electric

typewriters, dot matrix printers and shorthand skills; these were important skills to have as administrators in order to make them competitive in the market. Looking at the argument above, this generation of administrators entered a workspace that was changing. The office space featured more specialisation and divisions that resembled the developments that took place in the wider economy. Offices started being more departmentalised and there was greater emphasis on record keeping and communication. The focus was no longer on hand-written communication but now on using electric typewriters to ensure more efficiency and the faster completion of tasks. And at the same time, during their careers, they experienced technological change when new technology such as word processors and computers were introduced.

When I asked one of the participants, who is from the Baby Boomers generation and who started working as an administrator in the 1980s about the technological change that she experienced from when she started working until now she said:

> Times have definitely changed, technologically speaking. I started at Wits in 1988 and if my memory services me right we used and were also in the process of moving over from the electric typewriter to computers and using the dot matrix printers. You might be too young to remember dot matrix printers. (Participant 3).

The participant above highlights that if she compares the technological resources that she had to work with and that she experienced from when she started work in the 1980s and now, there has been a drastic change.
The technology that is used now in their line of work is very different compared to when they started.

As time progressed and with the economy changing, so did technology and as a result in the 1970s and 1980s, clerical work underwent a lot of change as will be seen in the following section.

6.3 How New Technology Changed Clerical Work

Clerical work went through great changes in the 1970s and the 1980s through the introduction of new technology, more specifically “word processing technology”

(Butler 1988, 20). As a result, new jobs and new skills were being created and old jobs were changing .Braverman (1974, 341) described the change that was taking place in the office as "facing an incipient upheaval…. We are at the beginning of a revolution". Butler (1988, 20) argues that despite the fact that offices were going through this drastic change and the fact that there were now so many women secretarial workers, "very little research has been done on sectorial work by sociologists of work or by feminists". Butler goes on to argue that the way in which the nature of the job has developed, the way in which the tasks were performed, and the relationship between secretaries and their bosses has to be understood "in terms of gender as well as capitalist social relations" (Butler 1988, 21). When women entered office work, industrial capitalism was expanding. And as mentioned above, it was previously men who worked as clerks or secretaries, who did administrative tasks, bookkeeping, shorthand and all other clerical work. With the expansion of capitalism, the office also went through rapid growth. New technologies were introduced as part of the growth and Butler (1988) argues that women were brought in to "operate the new technology and to do other simple and routine tasks which came to be seen as women's work while male clerks moved up into lower and middle management positions" (Butler 1988, 21). As mentioned above, there were some male clerks who resisted the employment of women in the offices, especially when they used shorthand, because when women combined shorthand and typewriting, their positions at the offices were assured. Thus the office hierarchy was changed and developed because of the growth in capitalism and gender relations, the author argues.

Harlon & Berheide (1994, 6) argue that the way in which companies now organise labour through the introduction of 'new information processing technology' has "eroded many of the advantages of office work, making it similar to women's blue-collar jobs in say, skill level, job security, automation, stress and management control of the production process".

6.4 Technical Change in South African Offices

The expansion of offices and office work in South Africa occurred in the 1960s and 1970s due to what was seen as South Africa's transition to "monopoly capitalism". This led to an increase in the number of mergers and takeovers, which in turn led to the growth of the size of companies. This was followed by an increase in the clerical workforce but also an increase in office costs, while productivity remained still. All the traditional methods used by office management at this point seemed to be ineffective. The introduction of microelectronic word processing in the office was seen as a very important tool for capitalism to not only generate profit but also to control the labour force. "Traditional work methods and the technology used in the office, and particularly in the paper work (which is the bulk of office work) were extremely inefficient; the work was slow, inaccurate, and often involved the duplication of effort, and was often poor quality" (Armstrong 1983, 60). Introducing word processors yielded a lot of advantages for office managers, such as increasing the productivity of clerical workers by 100-200 per cent, drastically increasing the accuracy of the work, decreasing the volume of paper used. The process of producing, retrieving and storing information became much more efficient. Word processors also decreased labour costs and enabled clerks to perform tasks they were unable to perform before. Armstrong then goes on to argue that the introduction of this new technology led to a fragmentation and the deskilling of the work produced by the clerical workers, and enabled the employing of women with lesser skills and at a very low wage. The author argues that a great deal of deskilling occurred; traditionally, there were skills that secretarial workers needed to have that required training and work experience such as typing and shorthand skills. She argues that word processers remove the need for clerical workers to have such skills, and that all a person needs is just to have "very basic ability to operate a standard keyboard" (Armstrong 1983, 67). "Word processors dispense with the need for layout skills, high typing speeds, and high levels of keystroke accuracy" (Armstrong 1983, 67). Armstrong goes on to argue that management is no longer in a position where they have to employ individuals with very good educational qualifications.

The black administrators who were part of this study entered the office space when it was going through drastic changes, both globally and in South Africa, as has been illustrated above. They entered a space when administrative and clerical work was dominated by women, especially by white women. The South African political climate at that time enabled more of them to participate in the economy through policies such as Affirmative Action that allowed for the previously disadvantaged groups to enter work spaces. They entered a space where written communication and old technology that was used by Baby Boomers was abandoned and new technology was being introduced. Butler (1988) argues that this period represented a change in the nature of administrative work. She even goes on to argue that women were brought in to "operate the new technology and to do other simple and routine tasks which came to be seen as women's work while male clerks moved up into upper and middle management positions" (Butler 1988, 21). Armstrong (1983) argues that the introduction of such technology assisted in increasing the clerical workforce and regarded traditional technological methods such as typewrites as ineffective. She also argues that the introduction of new technology then lead to the decrease of labour costs and an improvement in productivity.

6.5 Opportunities and Challenges of New Technology

When one looks at the use of new technology and computers among the administrators at Wits and the impact that it has on their work, one could argue that they do play a very big role for the administrators. For academic administrators whose work includes assisting the head of school, other lecturers and students, they use the new technology (specifically computers and printers) to book venues for tests, exams and lectures, to enter student marks and keep record of them, and to type and print out course outlines and material needed for both the lectures and the students. For administrators who work at Faculty level, they use the new technology to register the students into the Wits system, to update their courses and amend it if needed just to name a few of the tasks performed. And with regard to private secretaries whose role is to be a personal assistant to the Head of School, their tasks include booking venues, taking minutes at meetings and supporting the Head of School in any way possible. The introduction of

new technology to the Wits administration presents both opportunities and challenges which will be illustrated below.

6.5.1 Opportunities

Butler (1988) argues that the development and introduction of technology has speeded up the time in which tasks are performed and has also reduced the likelihood of errors compared to when a typewriter was still used. The introduction of new technology has also enabled administrators to be more efficient when completing their tasks. One could also argue that the introduction of new technology can lead to the development of skills that administrators such as those from the Baby Boomer generation did not have previously. They could develop new skills such as learning how to use computer programmes like Word and Excel, and also use other technological resources such as modern printers and telephones, skills that could help them gain a competitive advantage in this world that is global and keeps on introducing new technological advances.

The opportunities for the introduction of new technology are more likely to be appreciated by Millennials and administrators from Generation X, then by the Baby Boomers. Herman Miller (2017) argues that of the generations mentioned above, Millennials are the most technologically savvy, followed by genXers and then Baby Boomers. For Millennials technology is embedded in almost everything they do, from social media to travelling to keeping up with global trends; genXers see the workplace as a place to connect to technology. Baby Boomers, on the other hand, just see the workplace as place to connect to other people. And in actual fact, during an interview, one of the participants who works as a faculty administrator (falls under the Generation X category) complained that the technology used at Wits is a bit backward compared to the technology utilised in the corporate sector. She made an example of when faculty amendments take place, and complained that they first have to amend manually on paper before they upload it on the system. This is an example of what has been illustrated above, that genXers are techno-savvy and see the office as a place to connect to technology.

6.5.2 Challenges

One of the challenges mentioned by the participants, particularly by the Baby Boomers, is the pace at which new technology is being introduced.

One participants said:

> For me the adaptation of the hardware was not an issue such as newer and faster computers, fax machines, etc. I found the pace at which the software was being introduced a little bit more challenging (Participant 3).

She argues here that she has no problem with the introduction of this new technology but suggests that the pace is challenging, which is quite different to the views of the faculty officer mentioned above. Compared to what Participant 3 suggests, the faculty officer argues that the pace in which new technology is being introduced at Wits University is rather slow and could be improved. Again, this statement supports the argument presented above about how techno-savvy genXers are and how they easily adapt to the introduction of new technology because they enter the workplace with it. In addition to this point, the faculty officer went on to argue that trying to suggest or implement change is challenging and argues that she just has to do her own thing at times:

> It is how it has been done for the past 10 plus years so you will have to do it like that. So there is nothing you can suggest… we will just have to fix the application manually and do it all over again (Participant 4).

Much of the production has now moved from the typist to the technological machine, which Braverman (1974) regards as degrading or deskilling, opposing the idea that the introduction of new technology can lead to the development of new skills as mentioned in the section above. More will be said about this below.

Another challenge is that technological developments could reduce the number of secretaries or administrators needed to perform a task. The system has also offered management more opportunities for control over the labour process. The computers used by management now are able to get an exact figure of the amount of production that takes place, and get information from different work stations about which printers

are used at a particular time. Butler (1988) argues that Taylor would have been impressed with such a level of control and also argues that such surveillance does not go unnoticed by the workers as it puts pressure on them to not only act but also perform tasks in a specific way.

Lastly, another challenge which all of the administrators highlighted regardless of the racial group or generation they belong to, is how the #FeesMustFall movement and the introduction of new technology could lead to them losing their jobs.

#FMF is a student-led social movement that started in 2015 and led to massive student protests. Towards the end of 2015 the movement achieved a massive victory as they managed to get President Jacob Zuma to drop the government's plans of increasing the tuition fee for 2016 by 11.5 per cent. The students achieved this by shutting down universities around the country through their demonstrations (Naicker 2016, 54).

> What began as a protest over proposed increases, soon led to nation-wide calls for free education, with thousands of students, workers and parents on the streets in scenes reminiscent of the mass-based people's power movements of the 1970s and 1980s (Naicker 2016, 54).

Even though all the administrators express their support for the students' call for free and decolonised education, their concern is whether the university will be able to afford to employ them if free education is implemented. From their understanding, the majority of the university's budget comes from student fees, and part of the budget goes to paying their salaries. And because they are at the "bottom of the food chain" in the field of academia, they believe that because they are not as important as the academics, they will be the first to be cut in order for the university to save costs. The new technology that is introduced will be doing their job for them. One of the administrators explained to me that there are already measures that the departments have taken to save costs as their budgets have already been cut. One of the measures is to switch off the lights, fans or heaters during the day in the individual offices. Another measure is the implementation of upgraded technology to save costs for example, upgrading the printers that now enable lecturers to do some work for themselves and print from wherever they are; this work was previously done by the administrators. Another administrator who is extremely passionate about this topic had this to say:

> With #FeesMustFall how are the varsities going to function? ... In the long run, they are going to have to decrease staff, firstly us, because the funding will not be enough. It will mean that the lecturer will do their own printing and photocopying using this new printer (Participant 5).

So in essence both the possibility of free education and the introduction of upgraded technology pose a threat to the job security of administrators at Wits as there is a possibility that they might both lead to the administrators losing their jobs.

At the same time, however, a challenge could then be that the introduction of new technology could lead to deskilling as argued by Braverman (1974). The following section takes the discussion on deskilling versus reskilling debate further.

6.6 Deskilling and Reskilling of the Administration Sector

This section seeks to explore whether the introduction of new technology to clerical work has deskilled the sector as argued by Amanda Armstrong (1983), or if it has reskilled the administrators by creating a demand for new or different skills.

Firstly, it is important to explore what is defined as a skill, as this is a highly contested term. Paul Thompson (1989) argues that it is not always necessarily clear in literature about what skills are or how the changes in skills are measured or what the systematic definition is. But he goes on to argue that in general, based on the changes in the labour process, the term "skills" is generally based on "knowledge, the unity of conception and execution and the exercise of control by the workforce" (Thompson 1989, 92). The idea of skill is closely linked to knowledge of the whole production process, as well as the control of the production process by the worker. But the term has also been measured by the historical notion of skills compared to how the labour process looks now. Dawn Butler (1988) outlines three possible components of the notion of skill, not all of which have to apply. Firstly, the person must exercise her/his knowledge in the task, incorporate conception and execution, and must have control over the labour. Secondly, the job must have a feature of a skill where the job has skill requirements. The third notion is where a "certain skilled or unskilled status may be attributed to a job without this necessarily reflecting the actual skilled nature of the task or where workers have

been able to negotiate one or the other of the labels together with corresponding wages" (Butler 1988, 27). In essence, this shows that skill is not objective but it is something that is socially constructed.

When looking at the notion of skill in clerical work, clerical work was in the past relatively small and dominated by men. The workers were in control of their tasks, exercised their knowledge, and incorporated conception and execution in their tasks. The number of administrators or clerks back then were very limited and the work was centralised. As Armstrong (1983) and Anderson (1998) argue, acquiring skills of typing and shorthand, as well as job experience, were very important. There were even secretary and typing courses that one needed to do before they worked as clerical workers. Written communication at that time was very important and as a result being able to write well was a skill that was very important in order to make one competitive in the market. Today such requirements are almost non-existent and the introduction of new technology has made it easier for administrators to perform their tasks. Furthermore, in the past clerical workers who were men knew that they would end up in junior managerial positions but now the job is characterised by a glass ceiling. But does all of this mean that the sector has been degraded and deskilled?

With regard to generational differences, the theme that informs this whole research report, two of the administrators from the Baby Boomers generation studied secretarial courses before becoming secretaries. One participant even mentioned that she wanted to go to university to study Law but her mother encouraged her to do a secretarial course instead. She went on to mention that her mother included the fact the she has no other option but to study the secretarial course.

In an interview I had with an individual who works in the Human Resources division at the university, the individual mentioned that in most cases those who have worked at the university as administrators or clerks or even private secretaries for close to thirty years do not have an educational background; they came in because there was a need for administrators at the university that needed to be filled and that they were available to

fill. She also went on argue that as a result they had stayed in this job for many years for job security reasons and also because of benefits that are offered by the university.

Furthermore, the technology that exists now did not exist then. As mentioned in the previous chapter, when many of the administrators from the Baby Boomer generation started working at Wits, they used electric typewriters and dot matrix printers. The individual interviewed from the Human Resources department mentioned that the university did need to upgrade to new technologies, and will be required to do so in future to compete with global trends. To ensure that the employees are able to keep up with the constant change in the technologies, the university has ensured that its administrators go for regular computer training so that they can be well equipped with technological programmes that are being introduced. The experiences of most of the administrators from the Baby Boomer generation who participated in this study is that they do not mind the changes; they just mind the pace in which the new technology is being introduced.

With regards to genXers and the Millennials, a much younger generation mainly of black women, who have been at Wits for less than six years, they did not necessarily do secretarial courses but got the job and entered administration work during and even after the introduction of new technology. Their educational background is rather interesting. It varies from a diploma in teaching, diploma in management and one of them even has a degree in Performing Arts. And based on the knowledge we have on these generational groups, both Millennials and genXers are very techno-savvy as technology is part of their everyday life.

With regard to the debate about whether the introduction of this new technology has led to deskilling or reskilling of the administrative sector, this answer will depend on the generations. When men dominated the sector, they had to have specific qualifications and skills to carry out the work. They carried out tasks from conception to execution – for example, dealing with filling, finance administration and written communication with bosses and clients. Most of the administrators from the Baby Boomer generation who took part in this study do not have any previous work experience or educational

background. The work has been departmentalised with the entry of women as argued by Butler (1988), where ordinary administrators are left to do the less difficult or complicated tasks such as printing, answering phones and booking venues. They have little control over their work. In this case one could argue that to a large extent this has led to the deskilling of the sector. On the other hand, with the introduction of new technology, computer training was also introduced to all administrators as using computers requires a specific set of skills. So in essence, with regards to the experiences of administrators from the Baby Boomer generation, to a large extent the work has been deskilled but has also included some reskilling.

With regard to genXers and the Millennials, one could argue that they came in with a set of skills, from their educational background and from computer skills they had before joining the sector. But they too entered a sector that was already fragmented and very departmentalised, where the responsibilities were divided and they were left to do the less complicated tasks. This again qualifies as a deskilling of the administrative sector, if we base it on the definitions of skills that are listed above. Although they get computer training, they argue that the pace in which new technology is being introduced at the university is rather slow. So it could be argued in this case that from the experiences of the genXers and Millennials, the sector is being deskilled.

In conclusion what this chapter has attempted to show are the experiences of the different generations units of Wits administrators in terms of the transformation of technology and introduction of new technology and how it has impacted the transformation of administration work. This chapter has also shown how the introduction of new technology has led to both new opportunities and challenges, and that these opportunities and challenges differ depending on the experiences and characteristics of the generational groups. Wits administrators from the Baby Boomer generation have a harder time adapting to the constant change of technology as compared to the administrators who are Millennials and Generation X.. This chapter has also engaged the debate around deskilling and argues that, in general, there are a set of skills that are needed for the job as not everyone is eligible for it. And for someone to be able to use the computer to take minutes, books venues, send emails, there are set of

computer skills that are required. So there is a large level of deskilling that has occurred in this sector, but there are also other skills that these administrators, especially the Baby Boomers, have and gained in their work.

Together with the fact that the sector has over been largely deskilled, the sector has also been characterised as not having the opportunity to get promoted. In the past, before the sector was female-dominated, the ultimate goal for the men who were clerical workers was junior management positions, now, however, the administrators at Wits face a difficult challenge in getting a promotion. If one wants to have an administration job which is at a higher level and grading, they have to apply to a different department. The following chapter will focus on how the sector of administrative work has made it hard for opportunities of promotion to occur.

Chapter 7

THE DIFFICULTY IN GETTING PROMOTION AS AN ADMINISTRATOR AT WITS

7.1 Challenges in getting a promotion

A feature that all administrators at Wits experience, regardless of race or generation, is the challenge in getting a promotion. Regardless of how many years they have been working in a particular position or the qualifications that they might have, getting a promotion for them is very hard.

Thus one can argue that to some extent administrative work at Wits can be characterised by a "glass ceiling". The term "glass ceiling" is a concept that was popularized in a *Wall Street Journal* report in 1986 on corporate women (Martin 2010). As quoted by Martin (2010), Hymowtiz & Schelhardt (1986) describe the concept of glass ceiling as "an unofficial barrier to opportunities within an organisation or company which is perceived to prevent classes of workers, particularly women, from advancing to higher positions" (Martin 2010, 2). Martin (2010) also argues that glass ceilings can be regarded as an "unseen, yet unbreachable barrier that keeps minorities and women from using the upper rungs of the corporate ladder, regardless of their qualifications or achievements" (Martin 2010, 2).

Martin's argument could help explain the challenges in administrative work as a sector. When the sector was dominated by men, it was highly skilled, centralised and had a lot of opportunities for the clerical workers be promoted. But as the offices grew, and more women entered the sector, the chances of getting a promotion became more limited, to the extent where the job is now characterised by it being very hard to get a promotion as an administrator. At Wits, an administrator may work as an Administrative Assistant,

graded at level 10, for ten to fifteen years. They gained a lot of experience and perform their job very well, but they will still carry on working in the same position without getting a promotion. The only way they can get a promotion is if they apply for a position of a higher grade in a different department. For instance, one administrator from the generation X unit started at Wits as an administrative officer in a certain faculty at grade level 10; she worked there for close to five years without getting a promotion. For her to get a promotion she had to apply for a senior administrator position, which is a grade 8 level, in another department. A white female administrator from the Baby Boomer generation has been working as an administrator at grade 10 level for close to twenty years now, and has not had an opportunity to get promoted, despite the qualifications that she has obtained throughout the years. She argues that she has made attempts to apply for higher graded administrative posts in the university but did not get them because of policies that the government has adopted to address the issue of inequality of the past, issues that prevented black people from entering and participating in the economy. She argues that it is policies such as Affirmative Action and Black Economic Empowerment that enables the "glass ceiling" to be worse for white administrators at Wits.

Out of all the women that I interviewed in this study and asked about the possibility of getting a promotion in their work, it is only one out of fourteen participants who was told during the interview process that the job she was applying for has no promotion. And out of the fourteen participants, it was only one who thought it was a fair system. One of the administrators had this to say:

> If you are going to work in this field, you will have to learn to accept it and accept that these are the opportunities and these are the limitations. And you can take it or leave it. I am lucky that I did my teaching and management course which put me in a slightly better position. But if I had a degree, an honours or masters, I would have been in a much better position (Participant 6).

This participant argues that one has to eventually accept that this job comes with opportunities and limitations in terms of getting a promotion. She felt that she was in a "slightly better" position because she did a teaching and management course, but she would have been in an even higher position had she had the opportunity to get a degree. The limitations she highlights for herself are that she cannot get the position she wants

because of the lack of the right qualifications and that the others are also limited in getting promotions because they lack the qualifications. But she started by saying that people who are in this field should accept the challenge that is taking place in this sector as they have no choice because this job has very limited opportunities for a promotion.

When I asked another Wits employee from the HR department about the possibility of promotion for administrators at Wits, this is what they had to say:

> With regards to promotion at Wits, we generally look at two categories of staff, Support and Academic. Academic promotion is easy and straight forward. There is a criteria that should be met before promotion can be effected. For example, you must have been a lecturer for a number of years before you become a senior lecturer and so forth. For the Support category of staff though, promotion is non-existent. There is no predefined criteria for it. In other words, in order for you to progress to the next Peromnes grade, you have to apply for a job with a higher grade. It doesn't matter how long you have been in a position – if you don't apply for other posts, you will always be in that position (HR employee).

7.2 Limitations of being a Women in Administrative Work

Harlon & Berheide (1994, 1) argue that the limitations caused by the difficulty of getting a promotion are felt by people who occupy the "sticky floor of low paying mobility jobs at the bottom" and that "these barriers exist in the structure of work organisation in the structure of the educational and economic system and in the larger social order". And in relation to clerical work, the authors go on to argue that historically, clerical jobs had relatively higher status and pay as compared to factory or service jobs. But with more women entering clerical work and the introduction of technology in the offices, clerical jobs no longer functioned as a ladder of progression to more professional and managerial positions. As a result this "dead-ended the upward mobility of millions of women" (Harlan & Berheide 1994, 6).

Discrimination in terms of educational and economic opportunities contributed to the barrier women face. It has prevented women from getting the opportunity to start their careers on the same footing as men. Till this day, there is an over-representation of women in the lowest-paying jobs, especially black women. The connection between

racial but mostly gender segregation and low-level jobs still proves difficult to break. "These barriers are deeply ingrained in the overall structures and the daily practices of work organisations that we take for granted" (Harlan & Berheide 1994, 52). But despite the fact that the administrative sector has to some extent been characterised by the glass ceiling and a difficulty in getting a promotion, these administrators have also shown that they hold a certain level of power in their line of work. This power is what Dawn Butler (1988) regards as informal power, which will be discussed below, together with the relationship that these administrators have with lecturers which I have chosen to characterise as a superior versus subordinate type of relationship.

7.3 The Informal Power of Administrators

The role that university administrators play is one that is very important if the university is to function and to reach its objectives. Regardless of the positions that they are in, whether be it financial clerks, assistant administrators, faculty officers, undergraduate or post-graduate administrators or even personal assistant to heads of school, they play a very critical role in ensuring that the departments, faculties and the university functions on a daily basis.

One of the main features that came up during all of my interviews, throughout all generational units, is the superior vs. subordinate relationship that they have with lecturers. "University academic staff and administrators play critical and central roles in higher education in fulfilling the missions of education, research advancement and public service" (Kuo 2009, 44). Although they have different responsibilities, functions and roles at the university, both the lecturers and the administrators ultimately have the same "academic and intellectual values". However, they also differ in "dealing with issues affecting their work and life at the university, such as technological and economic challenges, decision-making processes, teaching and research commitments, conflict management and/or institutional effectiveness" (Kuo 2009, 44). The relationship between lecturers and these administrators is a complex one that has characteristics of professionalism, agreement but also conflict.

When I asked one of the participants about their relationship with lecturers, they had this to say:

> I feel like I am fairly good at connecting with the staff; we have a good relationship. But I also believe academics are a different ball game; they are not the easiest people to work with. There is a specific personality type that goes into the field of academia. Those people do not want to be irritated by the little details; they want to focus on exams and their research and I often feel like I am a nag. When I want something I have to push them and that drives me insane (Participant 7).

> And it is hard because I am not considered as an equal because in the field of academia they are superior to you as a member of the support staff because of their achievements (Participant 7).

The two quotes above illustrate an example of a relationship that an administrator has with lecturers in their department. She started off by highlighting the fact that she has a fairly good relationship with other lecturers but also highlights how challenging it is to work with them because they are ultimately more superior to support staff and act as such. In the quotes above, the administrator also illustrates that the superiority that these lecturers have is because of their academic achievements and qualifications that she herself does not have, which in essence puts the lecturer in a higher "social ranking" than her.

But what you also find in this relationship is what Dawn Butler (1988) refers to as "informal power" that these administrators have. "Informal power" is a concept that Butler (1988, 25) refers to as an instance when these administrators are able to "manipulate the personal relationships of the job to their advantage". Administrators are in a position where they are within "the corridors of power" where they have access to a lot of confidential information as they are in the centre of the production of the university. Academic administrators, for example, are the only ones who know how to use the Wits system to book venues for tests and lecturers, they are the only ones who know which are the most cost-effective vendors to use for which services, how to take minutes for important meetings, enter marks and even organise and set diaries for the Head of School. If the printer is broken, they either know how to fix it or who to contact to come fix it. If the lecturers' computers or printers are broken, they call the administrators for assistance. One could even go so far as to argue that without the

presence of most of these administrators at the university, the mission of the university will not be fulfilled because lecturers have to focus on lecturing, research and publishing and might not have time to learn about administrative processes in the department.

An example of how informal power has been exercised by administrators at Wits is through an example where a printer that is used by all staff members in that department was not working. This administrator had the responsibility of deciding whether the department needed to invest in a new printer or to get someone to fix this one. Because she knew that the decision would depend on which option was the most cost-effective. She obtained two quotes, one for a new printer, and got a more expensive quote to the old printer; the Head of Department approved the quote to get a new one because it was cheaper. She argues that getting the old printer fixed would be a problem not only for the staff in the long run but also for her because it is her responsibility to make sure that it works. So in this case, she used her 'informal power' to manipulate the department into getting a new printer.

This chapter has attempted to show that as the years progressed, the administrative sector has been characterised by "glass ceiling" and this is experienced by all generations . This chapter has also shown that there is one more factor that the administrators from the Baby Boomer generation added to their experience of the glass ceiling, and that is their chances of getting a promotion are rather worse than that of black women who are in the same line because of the adoption of policies such as Affirmative Action and Black Economic Empowerment. But despite the challenges in getting a promotion, the fact that these administrators have informal power has been highlighted, together with their relationship with lecturers and the importance of their role as administrators at the university.

Chapter 8

CONCLUSION

This research report has attempted to show that although the experiences of women in South Africa have been similar, their entry into the labour force has definitely been informed by race and class. From the data that has been collected to inform this research, the same seems to be the case for administrative work at Wits University.

There has been a gap in the literature that this report has attempted to fill, and that is the lack of a study that examines women from different racial groups who are in the same level of occupation. The existing literature focuses on studying white women who occupy high professional jobs as compared to poor black women who occupy low-earning and precarious jobs.

The question that this report has attempted to answer is in what ways does race and generational differences affect the workplace experiences of white-collar women workers? And the answer to this question is that race has affected workplace experiences of Wits administrators through generational differences that are informed by racial differences. While generations share similar experiences and world views, they are not a homogeneous category. This study shows how race is crucial in shaping the responses of the three generations I have examined. Thus while generational differences have informed the whole structure of this essay, they can best be described as distinct "racial generations". The experiences of the administrators included in this study represent an intersection between race, gender and generational differences.

This report has classified the administrators into three generational groups – namely Baby Boomers, Generation X and Millennials. The Baby Boomer generational group consists mostly of white women who have been working at Wits for fifteen to thirty years, and they range from the ages of 53 to 72 years. The Generation X group consists mostly of black women who have been working at Wits for not more than six years, and

who range between the ages of 37 and 52 years. The Millennials are the youngest generational group of the Wits administrators; they consist mostly of black women and their ages range from 18 to 36 years.

There are a number of ways in which these generational differences have been informed and experienced by the administrators of Wits University. These include working outside of the job description vs. not having control of their labour, which has been experienced by all generational groups and almost in the same way; introduction of new technology and transformation of administrative work, which has affected all generational groups but in different ways. Baby Boomers have experienced a lot of change in technology as, when they started working as Wits administrators, they used electric typewriters and dot matrix printers and later on moved to using computers. The Generation Xers and Millennials started working using the new technology and as a result the change for them has not been that great. Baby Boomers complained about the rapid pace in which the new technology is being introduced, while the Generation Xers and Millennials complained that the pace is too slow.

One of the main topics that came up when talking about the transformation of administrative work and the introduction of new technology is that of deskilling versus reskilling. This dissertation has argued that although the introduction of new technology has reskilled these administrators to a certain extent, the sector has been largely deskilled. And in terms of the experiences of the different generations, all of the groups have experienced deskilling, but the generation that has been reskilled the most is the Baby Boomers. And lastly, the sector of administrative work at Wits is characterised by a challenge in getting promotions, and this is a factor that is experienced by all generational groups. The grading and positionality of their jobs are set using a system called the Peromnes system; for the administrators to move up a grading level, they have to apply for another post in another department. A few of the administrators from the Baby Boomer generation complained that even if they do apply they would not get the post because of policies such as Affirmative Action and Black Economic Empowerment, which result in these posts being given to black women. They said that this is the reason why they have been working in the same posts for so many years.

So in essence this research report has shown that there are generational differences which have influenced the experiences of the administrators at Wits, and that these generational differences have been informed by race, what I call racial generations.

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APPENDIX A

PARTICIPANTS QUOTED IN THE STUDY

Participants:	Administrative position:	Grade/level:	Race:
Participant 1	Personal Assistant to the Head of School	Grade 10	White
Participant 2	Senior Administrator	Grade 8	Black
Participant 3	Administrative officer	Grade 10	White
Participant 4	Faculty Officer	Grade 9	Black
Participant 5	Faculty Officer	Grade 9	Black
Participant 6	Senior Administrator	Grade 8	White
Participant 7	Senior Administrator	Grade 8	White
Participant 8	Secretary	Grade 10	White
Participant 9	Administrative Officer	Grade 10	Black
Participant 10	Senior Administrator	Grade 10	White
Participant 11	Secretary	Grade 10	Black
Participant 12	Administrative Officer	Grade 10	Black
Participant 13	Personal Assistant	Grade 10	Black
Participant 14	Administrative assistant	Grade 10	Black

Appendix B

Questionnaire

Questionnaire for MA research project: The experiences of white collar women administrators at Wits University

1. **Race**
   Tick all that apply.
   - [ ] White
   - [ ] Black
   - [ ] Coloured
   - [ ] Indian
   - [ ] Other
   - [ ] Other: _____

2. **Age**
   Mark only one oval.
   - ◯ 20-30
   - ◯ 30-40
   - ◯ 41-above
   - ◯ Other: _____

3. **Dependents**
   Mark only one oval.
   - ◯ yes
   - ◯ no
   - ◯ Other: _____

4. **Marital status**
   Mark only one oval.
   - ◯ married
   - ◯ single
   - ◯ relationship
   - ◯ widow
   - ◯ Other: _____

5. **Do you have help from parents or domestic work?**
   Mark only one oval.
   - ◯ yes
   - ◯ no
   - ◯ Other: _____

6. **Occupation and level of occupation**

7. **How long have you been at Wits?**
Mark only one oval.

- ◯ 0-3 years
- ◯ 3-6 years
- ◯ 6-above years
- ◯ Other: _____

8. **What kind of transport do you use to get to work?**
Mark only one oval.

- ◯ private car
- ◯ public transport
- ◯ lift club
- ◯ Other: _____

9. **Residential area**