

South African women managers' experiences and perceptions of organisational justice and leadership self-efficacy

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A research project submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of MA by coursework and Research Report in the field of Industrial Psychology in the faculty of Humanities, University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, on 12 February 2013.

Declaration

I declare that this research project entitled '*South African women managers' experiences and their perceptions of organisational justice and leadership self-efficacy*' is my own, unaided work. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination at this and any other university.

Signed _____

Ruth Rumbidzai Mupambirei

This _____ day of _____ 2013

Word Count 30 760

Abstract

Although more South African women are progressing into managerial positions, they are doing so at a slow pace and continue to face many challenges (Paulsen, 2009; McKinsey & Company, 2010; Molebatsi, 2009). Therefore, this research set out to investigate South African women managers' experiences and how they might relate to their perceptions of organisational justice and perceptions of leadership self-efficacy. Perceptions of organisational justice and perceptions of leadership self-efficacy are significant because they have been individually linked to motivation, commitment, satisfaction and performance (Baldwin, 2006; Combs, 2002; Colquitt, et al., 2001; McCormick, et al., 2002; Paglis, 2010). In addition, the research aimed to explore how these two concepts might interplay.

The research took a qualitative approach and conducted in-depth interviews with eight senior women managers from different organisations. A tape recorder was used to record the interviews and thematic content analysis was used to analyse the data collected.

The women in the study highlighted both negative and positive work experiences in their role as women senior managers. Further, the study revealed that senior women managers are not a homogeneous group as their experiences are also influenced by factors such as their race, marital status and number and/or age their children. The study also showed that the senior women managers' experiences were related to their perceptions of organisational justice and leadership self-efficacy. The women in this study were vibrant and positive, and reflected high levels of leadership self-efficacy. It was also clear that these women's experiences placed more emphasis on procedural and interactional justice than on distributive justice as they placed greater emphasis on work relationships, how they were treated and the fairness of work processes. In addition, the research also found a link between perceptions of organisational and perceptions of leadership self-efficacy.

Acknowledgement

First, I would like to thank God for giving me strength throughout this research project.

I would also like to thank all the people that supported me throughout this research project:

My supervisor, Dr Grace Khunou for her guidance and direction, I have learnt a lot from you.

Thank you for your time, help and support.

The women who participated in this research, thank you so much for your time and for opening up to me and sharing with me your experiences. I really appreciate it.

To my family, especially my brothers and mother, thank you for your encouragement and for believing in me.

Last and most importantly, to my husband, I wouldn't have done this without you. Thank you for all your support and encouragement, I love you.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The study examined South African senior women managers' experiences in the workplace and their perceptions of organisational justice and perceptions of leadership self-efficacy.

Organisational justice refers to an individual's perception of fairness in an organisation's processes, interactions and outcomes (Greenberg, 1990; Hubbell & Chory-Assad, 2005).

Leadership self-efficacy pertains to the confidence that one has in his/her knowledge, skills and abilities to lead others and accomplish various leadership tasks (Hannah, Avolio, Luthans, & Harms, 2008; McCormick McCormick, Tanguma, & Lopez-Forment, 2002; Paglis, 2010).

South Africa has been trying to address the underrepresentation of women in the workplace by encouraging organisations to diversify their workforce and implement corrective labour policies such as the Employment Equity Act of 1998 and Affirmative Action policies. However, women have been progressing slowly into senior managerial positions (BWASA, 2011; Mathur-Helm, 2005; Molebatsi, 2009), and continue to face many challenges in the workplace (Chuma, 2010; McKinsey & Company, 2010; Paulsen, 2009). Given South Africa's history of apartheid and the exclusion of women in the workplace (Mathur-Helm, 2005; Msimang, 2000), perceptions of organisational justice become important to working women, as they look to their organisation for support and guidance. In addition, senior women managers need to have leadership self-efficacy to provide them with confidence in their leadership and managerial positions and to help them overcome the challenges they face (Paglis, 2002; Skinner, 2012). Therefore, perceptions of organisational justice and perceptions of leadership self-efficacy were identified as crucial for the success of South African senior women managers.

The purpose of the study was threefold. First, the study examined the experiences of senior women managers in different South African organisations. Second, the research explored how these experiences were related to senior women managers' perceptions of organisational justice and perceptions of leadership self-efficacy. Lastly, the research examined how these two concepts (perceptions of organisational justice and perceptions of leadership self-efficacy) could be linked. In the process, the research also highlighted what some of South Africa's

organisations are doing to ensure justice and fairness in the organisation and to support the development of senior women managers.

1.2 Rationale

After apartheid, the focus in South Africa has been to promote equal rights for all citizens and to incorporate those previously disadvantaged into the labour market through various corrective labour legislation such as the Employment Equity Act and Affirmative Action policies.

However, it has been argued that sometimes the focus has been on correcting racial imbalances and less focus has been given to gender imbalances (Mathur-Helm, 2005). As a result, although more South African women are entering the formal labour market and taking on more managerial positions than before, women managers are still underrepresented and continue to experience many challenges in the workplace (BWASA, 2011; McKinsey & Company, 2010). Some of the challenges they face include dealing with stereotype threats, working in male dominated environments, lack of adequate support services, lack of career advancement, absence of women role models and dealing with multiple roles (Crampton & Mishra, 1999; Hoyt & Blascovich, 2007; Liff & Ward & Wards, 2001; McKinsey & Company, 2010; Marthur-Helm, 2005; Molebatsi, 2009; Ngoako, 1999; Paulsen, 2009; Renton, 2009). These experiences have the potential of making women managers question their perceptions of justice and fairness in the workplace (organisational justice) and their leadership capabilities and confidence (leadership self- efficacy) and may threaten their ability to become effective leaders and managers.

Perceptions of organisational justice are important because they have been shown to impact on employees' job satisfaction, organisational commitment, organisational trust, organisational citizenship behaviour, productivity and withdrawal behaviour (Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter & Ng, 2001; Simons & Roberson, 2003; Syaebani & Sobri, 2011). Leadership self-efficacy is also essential for women managers because it is seen as a necessary component of leadership effectiveness and provides managers with motivation and confidence in their ability to lead and manage others (Hannah, Avolio, Luthans, & Harms, 2008; McCormick, Tanguma & Lopez-Forment, 2002; Paglis & Green, 2002). Leadership self-efficacy is vital for women in managerial positions as it motivates them to persevere with their careers despite the challenges they face (Skinner, 2012). Understanding the experiences that women managers have in the workplace

may then provide an understanding of how women managers develop, change or maintain their perceptions of organisational justice and perceptions of leadership self-efficacy. It is therefore important to explore how women managers' experiences in the workplace relate to their perceptions of organisational justice and perceptions of leadership self-efficacy.

Further, research shows that perceptions of organisational justice and perceptions of leadership self-efficacy impact on job performance (Baldwin, 2006; Colquitt et al., 2001; McCormick, et al., 2002; Paglis, 2010). Hence the aim of the research was to investigate how perceptions of organisational justice and perceptions of leadership self-efficacy are associated. In doing so, the research explored other contextual or underlying factors such as perceptions of work processes and outcomes that are related to perceptions of leadership self-efficacy. This was valuable because perceptions of leadership self-efficacy are generally believed to develop and be associated with past performance accomplishments in similar positions and modelling of behaviour from others (McCormick et al. 2002; Bussey & Bandura, 1999).

This research intended to make three main contributions. First, to contribute to the body of research on South African women managers' experiences in the workplace. Second, to provide an understanding of how women managers' experiences relate to their perceptions of organisational justice and perceptions of leadership self-efficacy. Lastly, by investigating how perceptions of organisational justice and perceptions of leadership self-efficacy interplay or might be perceived as linked, this research contributed to the limited research on additional factors that may relate to or potentially contribute to the development of leadership self-efficacy. It is also important to note that not only is research linking perceptions of organisational justice and perceptions of leadership self-efficacy lacking, but most of the research on perceptions of organisational justice and perceptions of leadership self-efficacy has been quantitative (for example, Colquitt et al., 2001; Esterhuizen and Martins, 2008; Hannah, Avolio, Luthans, and Harms, 2008; Hubbell & Chory-Assad, 2005; Jepsen & Rodwell, 2010; McCormick et al., 2002; Paglis, 2010; Rana et al., 2011). Further, research on organisational justice perceptions among managers, especially among women managers is limited. This research therefore aimed to provide a qualitative approach, using in-depth interviews, to get a deeper understanding of how perceptions of organisational justice and leadership self-efficacy are developed, changed or maintained by exploring women managers' experiences.

1.3 Research Structure

This research report is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 introduced the research topic and the rationale for the research. Chapter 2 provides a literature review on women managers' experiences and a review of the two constructs that were explored in this research – perceptions of organisational justice and perceptions of leadership self- efficacy. The chapter concludes by clarifying the research aims and the research questions that were investigated. Chapter 3 provides a detailed description of how the research was conducted, and also discusses the reliability and validity of the data collected before concluding with a consideration of possible limitations of the study. Chapter 4 provides a discussion of the research findings. Chapter 5 draws conclusions on the findings and makes recommendations to possibly improve senior women managers' experiences and to tackle some of the limitations of this study.

Chapter 2 Literature review

2.1 Introduction

The following chapter provides a literature review on women managers' experiences and perceptions of organisational justice and leadership self-efficacy. The chapter will begin with a brief historical background of the employment of women in South Africa and an overview of women in management. This is followed by a description of women managers' experiences in the workplace. Organisational justice and leadership self-efficacy theories will then be presented as they will also be used to explain South African women managers' experiences. This chapter will also highlight some of the limitations with past research studies and foreground the rationale for this research study. The chapter will conclude with research questions that were investigated.

2.2 Historical Background

Discrimination on the basis of race and gender in South African organisations can be explained by first understanding South Africa's history (Mathur-Helm, 2005). During apartheid, Blacks and other minorities¹, especially women were discriminated from the same educational and career advancements as White men (Mathur-Helm, 2005; Msimang, 2000). Most women were excluded from formal employment, with the exception of a few White women who managed to get administration jobs (Msimang, 2000). Black women on the other hand were mostly employed as domestic workers or cleaners, worked in poor conditions, and had no access to education compared to White women. In addition, women were not protected by law and because South Africa was very much a patriarchal society as women were seen as inferior to men and their main role in society was to take care of the family (Mathur-Helm, 2005; Msimang, 2000). This inequality of power between men and women meant that resources such as information and income were not equally shared (Mathur-Helm, 2005).

1994 marked the end of the apartheid era. The new democratic government sought to redress past injustices and to eliminate unfair discrimination among those previously disadvantaged- Blacks,

¹ Blacks and other minorities refer to Africans, Coloureds and Indians/Asians, women and people with disabilities

Coloureds and Indians/Asians, women and those with disabilities-in education and the workplace (Esterhuizen, 2008; Msimang, 2000). In addition, corrective labour policies were introduced, giving preferential treatment to those previously disadvantaged in order to protect and improve their status in the workplace (Cross, 2004; Esterhuizen & Martins, 2008; Molebatsi, 2009; Msimang, 2000).

The introduction of the Employment Equity Act of 1998 and other labour legislation such as the Labour Relations Act of 1995 (LRA) and the Basic Conditions of Employment Act of 1997 (BCEA) have been crucial in protecting all workers, setting minimum working conditions, and promoting the employment of those previously disadvantaged (Blacks-Africans, Coloureds and Indians/Asians; women and people with disabilities). Section 2 of the Employment Equity Act states that the Act aims to promote fair treatment and equal employment opportunities for all; to eliminate unfair discrimination and to promote Affirmative Action policies and ensure equal representation of all different groups of people in all levels in the workplace. However, these corrective labour policies have sometimes been erroneously viewed as tokenism and reverse racism (Benatar, 2008; Mabokela, 2000). Therefore, as stated by Esterhuizen and Martins (2008), organisations should be truly committed to transformation and change; implement corrective labour policies fairly; eliminate unfair discrimination in the workplace and focus on ensuring justice and fairness in organisations.

2.3 Women in Management

The increase in the participation of women in the formal labour market is in line with international trends. However, it is also evident in South Africa, and internationally, that women are still very much underrepresented in management positions or in decision making roles (Carli & Eagly, 2001; Eagly, 2002; Hoyt, 2007; Konrad, Kramer, & Erkut, 2008; Mathur-Helm, 2005; Omar & Ogenyi, 2004; Schein, 2001; Schyns & Sanders, 2005). (Schein's (2001) international study on women in management in Asia, Europe and America also found that despite the societal, legal, and organisational changes, women were still underrepresented in managerial positions. Similar findings were reported by Omar & Ogenyi (2004) and Mathur-Helm's (2005) research on women in management in Nigeria and South Africa respectively. These finding were attributed to the widely held 'think manager – think male' attitude, which meant that women were not treated as equals, resulting in bias in employment decisions such as selection,

placement, promotion, and training and development (Crampton & Mishra, 1999; Schein, 2001; Mathur-Helm, 2005). For example, Liff & Ward's (2001) research on women managers' views of promotion decisions into senior management positions revealed that promotion decisions were sometimes seen as unclear and subjective. Hence, this could also have contributed to the low numbers of women in management positions.

The 2012 Business Report by Grant Thornton International showed that globally, women currently occupy 21% of managerial positions-one in five senior management roles. Sadly, there has been very little change over the past few years, as this is very similar to the level observed in 2004-19%. Konrad, Kramer and Erkut (2008) argue that this is of huge concern because numbers do matter. They interviewed a number of women in order to find out about their experiences as Fortune 1000 directors. The findings of the research revealed that having more women on the corporate boards indicated that women were taken more seriously and this put the women at ease, as they felt less lonely and less on the spotlight.

Although a number of legislation has been passed in the new democratic South Africa, gender inequality and unfair treatment in organisations is still evident (Esterhuizen & Martins, 2008; Mabokela, 2000; Mabokela & Mawila, 2004; Mathur-Helm, 2005, 2006). In addition, the South African government and organisations have not been successful in increasing the representation of women in management positions (BWASA, 2011; Mathur-Helm, 2005). Esterhuizen (2008) and Mathur-Helm (2005) suggest possible reasons why this could be the case. These include lack of commitment from management to effectively implement and manage employment equity legislation; the inability to manage workplace diversity appropriately and failure to fully accept and treat women fairly and equally in workplace. The 2011 Report by the Business Women's Association of South Africa (BWASA) noted that although women comprise 51.3% of the South African population and 45.1% of the employed population, this was not reflected in the leadership of the workforce. Figure 1 provides a breakdown of the current status of South African women in management.

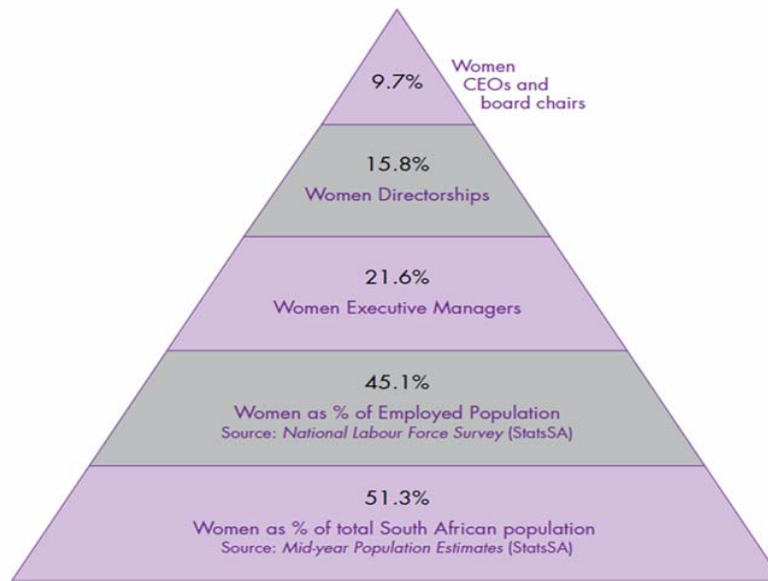


Figure 1. Census pyramid (from BWA South African Women in Corporate Leadership Census, 2011)

A recent report by the Grant Thornton International Business Report (2012) stated that South African women currently hold 28% of senior management positions. Although this is higher than the global average of 21%, it is clear that women managers are still underrepresented. Mathur-Helm (2006) interviewed women managers from four major retail South African banks in order to investigate this glass-ceiling phenomenon. Glass ceiling can be defined as a barrier of prejudice and discrimination that excludes women from higher level leadership positions (Federal Glass Ceiling Commission, 1995). Mathur-Helm (2006) concluded that evidence of the glass-ceiling phenomenon was due to a combination of organisational culture, policies and strategies and women's own competence, or lack thereof. It is therefore important to investigate women managers' experiences in the workplace in order to better understand organisational and individual factors that may contribute to the glass ceiling phenomenon.

It is also important to note that these figures above focus on management representation in private organisations and not in public or government organisations. Looking at some of the recent statistics provided by government, one can see that although women are underrepresented in both the private and public sector, there is some difference between the two sectors (BWASA, 2011; Mathur-Helm, 2005). For example, the 2011 report on South Africa's progress in the

implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)² reported that women occupy 37.4% of senior management positions in the public sector. BWASA (2011) also revealed that women occupy 35% of senior management positions in government compared to the private sector (21.6%). This could be because government appears to be more dedicated to redressing past imbalances and to promoting women in senior positions and they are trying to set an example to other private institutions. Mathur-Helm (2005) also acknowledged that presence of more women managers in government. It was suggested that this could be because there are less financial implications for managers in government than in the private or corporate environment as women could not be trusted with this responsibility. This again unfortunately provides evidence of widely held perceptions that women are not as competent managers as men.

According to the South African Department of Labour (2009, as cited in Booyen & Nkomo, 2010), White males still dominate top and senior management positions followed by white females, black males and then black females. BWASA (2011) reported that of the women in senior management positions, 70.6% positions are held by White women and 14.4% by Black women. As a result, Black women managers are found to be the most marginalised (Mathur-Helm, 2005).

2.4 Experiences of Women Managers

Research on women managers shows that women continue to face a variety of challenges in the workplace (Bussey & Bandura, 1999; Chesterman, Ross-Smith & Peters, 2004; Hoyt & Blascovich, 2005, 2007; Jamali & Nejati, 2009; Kloot, 2004; Lipka, 2008; Mathur-Helm, 2005, 2006; Santovec, 2010; Schein, 2001; Skinner, 2012). This may be attributed to the way women are perceived in terms of their gender characteristics and the gender roles they play. Gender refers to differences between men and women in terms of their roles and responsibilities which are learned and influenced by various societies and cultures (Bussey & Bandura, 1999). Gender roles are defined as “consensual beliefs about the attributes of women and men” (Eagly & Karau, 2002, p.574), implying that women and men are expected to behave in a certain way. However, this categorisation of women and men enforces gender stereotypes (Bussey & Bandura, 1999;

² An overview of South Africa’s progress in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs): The Governance and Administration Cluster Perspective Presentation to Parliament. Presentation to Parliament on 06 September 2011. http://www.dpsa.gov.za/docs/presentations/MDG_Presentation_01_Sep_2011.pdf

Eagly & Karau, 2002). The following are some of the experiences and challenges that women managers face in the workplace.

2.4.1 Stereotype Threats

Women managers around the world continue to deal with stereotype threats in the workplace (Booyesen & Nkomo, 2010; Chuma & Ncube, 2010; Hoyt & Blascovich, 2005, 2007; Schein, 2007). Stereotypes are defined as “relatively fixed and oversimplified generalizations about groups or classes of people” (Jones & Colman, 1996, p. 843). Research shows that stereotypes affect how women managers are perceived and evaluated (Booyesen & Nkomo, 2010; Chuma & Ncube, 2010; Eagly and Carli, 2003; Schein, 2007). Chuma & Ncube (2010) conducted focus group interviews with senior managers in the banking industry in Zimbabwe. They found that stereotypes enforced gender segregation and was one of the reasons why few women were found in senior positions of the organisations.

Hoyt and Blascovich (2007) note that the role congruity theory also enforces stereotypical behaviours because it leads to prejudice against women in leadership positions. The theory developed by Eagly and Karau (2002) attempts to explain prejudice towards women managers and to explain the underrepresentation of women managers. The theory states that women are incongruent with the leadership role because of their characteristics and personalities. According to this theory, there is incongruity between women’s gender roles and leadership roles which means that women are perceived as less favourable leaders compared to men. Unlike men, women are believed to be more communal, nurturing, caring, compassionate and to have qualities appropriate for taking care of the family and children, and less qualities believed to be essential for a leadership role such as managing, leading and controlling (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Booyesen and Nkomo’s (2010) research also provided evidence of stereotypical behaviours due to widely held traditional gender role expectations. In their study, men had less positive attitudes towards women managers and were less likely to attribute successful managerial characteristics to women. This unfortunately continues to enforce biases in various employment decisions such as selection, placement, promotion, and training of women managers (Chuma & Ward, 2001; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Hoyt & Blascovich, 2007; Paludi & Strayer, 1985; Pfof & Fiore, 1990; Schein, 2007).

Although gender stereotypes continue to persist, research findings reveal that there are actually few differences in the leadership effectiveness and performance of women and men (Bussey & Bandura, 1999; Eagly, 2002; Jamali & Nejati, 2009; Kloot, 2004). It appears that women and men are both as equally likely to possess characteristics necessary for managerial success (Schein, 2001; Omar & Ogenyi, 2004). In addition, the 2010 Women Matter Report by McKinsey and Company revealed that various international companies found gender diversity in managerial positions to be beneficial and to lead to better financial performance. The report stated that women are capable of bringing in a different managerial or leadership style that can be beneficial for organisations. For example, women are said to encourage greater collaboration and consultative decision making processes and to have more emotional intelligence (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Chesterman, Ross-Smith, & Peters, 2004). Further, Konrad, Kramer and Erkut (2008), argued that women managers are likely to contribute to the organisation by providing different perspectives on the issues and using their interpersonal skills to positively influence organisational processes and decisions.

2.4.2 Multiple roles

Omar and Ogenyi's (2004) research on the experiences of women managers in Nigeria revealed that women managers have the challenge of fulfilling societal and cultural roles in addition to their role as managers. Most women managers are wives and/or mothers and have to find a way to balance their work and family life, and unfortunately sometimes, women end up having role conflict, and this causes them stress and burnout (Bussey & Bandura, 1999; Chesterman, et al., 2004; Chuma & Ncube, 2010; Crampton & Mishra, 1999; Houle, Chiocchio, Favreau & Villeneuve, 2009; Judge & Colquitt, 2004; Liff & Ward 2001; Mathur-Helm, 2006; Ngoako, 1999). The 2010 Women Matter Report by McKinsey and Company among female executives, middle managers and CEOs acknowledged the challenges of balancing work and domestic responsibilities and demands and labelled this as the "double burden" syndrome. Unfortunately, failure to effectively find a work-life balance has been cited as one of the reasons women fail to successfully progress into senior managerial positions and why some may decide to change their careers (Mathur-Helm, 2006; Sealy, 2010).

However, Ruderman, Ohlott, Panzer and King (2002) attempted to explore the possible benefits that could come from playing multiple roles, despite the negative consequences that have been

documented. Their argument was that most women in managerial positions are highly competent and committed to success and therefore, would be capable of working hard and succeeding in each of their roles. Their research found that the multiple roles women play can provide psychological benefits, greater satisfaction, self-esteem, self-acceptance, and an opportunity to enhance interpersonal and multitasking skills. They add that playing multiple roles helps women develop skills needed to become effective managers.

2.4.3 Role models

As women are trying to penetrate the traditionally male dominated professions, the scarcity of successful women role models to learn from becomes a challenge (Chesterman et al., 2004; Matsui, Ikeda, Ohnishi, 1989). The 2010 Women Matter Research Report by McKinsey and Company also found that women across the globe revealed the lack of women role models to be one of the challenges they faced and as a barrier to career development. Hoyt and Blascovich (2007) emphasise that role models are essential because by presenting more examples of successful women leaders, more women managers are encouraged to have more positive responses to stereotype threats. Role models serve to provide advice and encourage confidence in others (Crampton & Mishra, 1999; Schott, 2004). Schott (2004) and Renton (2009) also adds that having a role model or mentor also helps women deal with role conflict and any uncertainties they may have in their work. Having supportive role models has also been found to improve women managers' leadership confidence (McKinsey & Company, 2010; Schott, 2004)

2.4.4 Support structures

As noted earlier, women have multiple roles to play and need support to help them find a suitable work-life balance. However, research shows that many women report a lack of pro-family public policies or support services such as child care in some organisations and this continues to put pressure on women to balance their work and family responsibilities (Chesterman et al., 2004; Davidson & Cooper, 1984; Jamali & Nejati, 2009). In addition, women managers interviewed by Chesterman et al. (2004) also acknowledged the importance of emotional support they received from colleagues and their superiors.

It is important to note that there are some organisations that are providing social and organisational support to their women managers (Chesterman et al., 2004). Chesterman et al.

(2004) found that some universities and public service organisations made provisions for flexible working hours such as flexi-time, part-time work and career breaks and family-friendly work practices which were highly valued. In addition, some women managers were also granted laptops and mobile phones which enabled them to work successfully away from the office. There was also a variety of women networks and mentoring programmes (mostly in universities) which provided women managers with emotional, personal and organisational support, advice and guidance. Although similar practices were also evident in some private organisations, women interviewed in most private organisations admitted that they still felt that they had to work full-time in order for them to progress (Chesterman et al., 2004). In some organisations however, women were not fully aware that these programmes were available and ended up finding their own mentors (Chesterman et al., 2004).

2.4.5 Male domination in management

Leadership has generally been regarded by society as a male task (Crampton & Mishra, 1999; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Konrad et al., 2008) and as a result, men continue to dominate managerial and senior positions in organisations (Booyesen & Nkomo, 2010; BWASA, 2011; Chuma & Ncube, 2010). Research shows that men are sometimes overprotective of ‘their territory’ (Chuma & Ncube, 2010). This often limits women managers’ access to senior or managerial positions and affects not only how women and men work together, but how male managers treat women managers (Booyesen & Nkomo, 2010; Schein, 2001; Jamali & Nejati, 2009; Mathur-Helm, 2006). As a result, women in senior positions are still a minority group and continue to be discriminated against (Mathur-Helm, 2005, 2006). Unfortunately this has meant that sometimes women have to adapt and conform to the rules of their male counterparts in order to be accepted and fit in (Liff & Ward, 2001; Omar & Ogenyi, 2004; Sealy, 2010). In addition, the few in these positions are constantly under pressure to prove themselves and have to deal with the fact that others may not be comfortable to take instructions from them (Chuma & Ncube, 2010; Omar & Ogenyi, 2004; Sealy 2010).

In addition, the presence of “good old boys’ network” not only discourages women from seeking top management positions, but excludes women from informal networks and activities where sometimes important information is discussed or shared and business conducted (Chesterman et

al, 2004; Chuma & Ncube, 2010; Kloot, 2004, Sealy, 2010). Crampton and Mishra (1999) and Sweeney and McFarlin (1997) add that for women, lack of access to informal networks may limit their opportunity to learn, access to pay increases, promotions and communication networks. Liff & Ward's (2001) research also revealed that informal relations between managers at different levels were just as important as formal policies and procedures in influencing the success of senior women managers.

2.4.7 Impact of labour legislation

Labour legislation and policies such as the South African Employment Equity Act and Affirmative Action aim to address the underrepresentation of women in managerial and senior positions in organisations (Booyesen, 2007; Mathur-Helm, 2005; Msimang, 2000). Although this has helped increase the number of women in management and other senior positions, Mathur-Helm's (2005) research findings showed that these corrective policies may sometimes have negative consequences on women, as the appointment of women managers is sometimes viewed as token appointments (by both men and women). As a result, women managers may continue to feel undervalued and demoralised (Mathur-Helm, 2005). Similar results were reported by Lipka (2008) and Sealey (2010). For example, Sealey (2010) found that women valued being selected and promoted based on merit, but found that the system used to promote women was biased and influenced mainly by the need to meet targets and quotas. On the other hand, women managers interviewed by Chesterman et al. (2004) reported that they did not see themselves as tokens and believed that they were appointed on merit. That is why Sealey (2010) notes that corrective labour policies can sometimes be merit-restoring or merit-violating for women managers. It is therefore important that women managers' selection and promotion is unbiased and that women are given appropriate reward for their performance and accomplishment in order to increase their confidence (Jamali & Nejati, 2009).

2.4.8 Impact of women managers' experiences

The above has provided an overview of women managers' experiences in South Africa and internationally. It is evident that some of the experiences described above have the potential of making women managers question their perceptions of justice or fairness in the organisation and their perceptions of leadership self-efficacy. This warranted the need to investigate women

managers' experiences and their perceptions of work processes and outcomes further, in order to see how they are related to their perceptions of organisational justice. In addition, it is also clear from the above that these experiences challenge women managers' confidence in their leadership or managerial roles. Therefore, it was also important to understand the relationship between women managers' experiences and perceptions of leadership self-efficacy in the South African context. The following provides a discussion of organisational justice and leadership self-efficacy theories.

2.5 Organisational Justice Theory

Organisational justice refers to an individual's perception of fairness in an organisation's processes, interactions and outcomes (Greenberg, 1990; Hubbell & Chory-Assad, 2005). It is therefore subjective (Baldwin, 2006). A meta-analysis of organisational justice perceptions found that organisational justice perceptions affect attitudes and behaviours and can be linked to various organisational outcomes such as job satisfaction, organisational commitment, performance, intention to leave, and organisational citizenship behaviour (Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2001). Similar findings were confirmed by Baldwin (2006), Bakhshi, Kumar & Rani (2009) and Jepsen and Rodwell (2010). In addition, Baldwin (2006) notes that when employees perceive justice in the workplace, they are more likely to experience increased well-being, morale and organisational trust. Perceptions of organisational justice can also influence leadership and managerial trust (Bakhshi et al., 2009; Hubbell & Chory-Assad, 2005; Pillai, Scandura & Williams 1999). However, when employees perceive injustice in the organisation, they may decide to leave the organisation, reduce their work effort or file a grievance (Baldwin, 2006; Jepsen & Rodwell, 2010).

Organisational justice comprises of four types of justice-distributive, procedural, interpersonal and informational, although the last two are sometimes combined under what is termed interactional justice (Colquitt et al., 2001; Esterhuizen & Martins, 2008; Jepsen, & Rodwell, 2010). These theories of organisational justice explain and influence employee behaviour (Greenberg, 1990). Each of these types of justice is described below.

2.5.1 Distributive justice

Distributive justice is concerned with the perceived fairness of the outcome in the allocation and distribution of resources or employment decisions (Chory & Westerman, 2009; Colquitt et al., 2001; Greenberg, 1990; Jepsen & Rodwell 2010; Simpson & Kaminski, 2007). Distributive justice focuses on whether the outcome of job selection, pay and benefit allocations, promotions and performance evaluation are considered fair (Esterhuizen & Martins, 2008; Jamali & Nejati, 2009; Jepsen, & Rodwell, 2010). This theory is derived from Adams equity theory of 1965 (Colquitt et al., 2001). According to this theory, the fairness of an outcome is determined by calculating the ratio of one's contributions or inputs (e.g., education, intelligence, and experience) to one's outcome (e.g. pay, promotion) and then comparing that ratio with that of a relevant colleague (Colquitt et al., 2001; Esterhuizen & Martins, 2008).

Distributive justice has been found to be positively related to job satisfaction, organisational commitment and trust, and negatively associated with organisational withdrawal and other negative employee reactions and conflict (Bakhshi et al., 2009; Colquitt et al., 2001; Jepsen & Rodwell 2010). Esterhuizen and Martins' (2008) research on perceptions of organisational justice or fairness on employment equity practices provides an instance of distributive injustice, for example, when employees reported that they felt management did not give them appropriate recognition or reward for their performance.

2.5.2 Procedural justice

Procedural justice is concerned with employees' perceptions of fairness with the methods and procedures used to reach a particular decision (Chory & Westerman 2009; Esterhuizen & Martins, 2008; Jepsen, & Rodwell, 2010). Procedural justice was introduced in 1975 by Thibaut & Walker from their work on legal procedures (Colquitt et al., 2001). It was later applied to organisations by Leventhal et al. (1980), who argued that fairness of procedures was determined by the presence (or lack thereof) of consistency, bias, accurate information, ethics, moral, voice and opinions (Baldwin, 2006; Colquitt et al., 2001; Esterhuizen & Martins, 2008). Examples of procedural justice entail information sharing, participation in decision making, and fair, clear and consistent implementation of procedures fairly (Colquitt et al., 2001).

Procedural justice has been found to influence organisational commitment, trust in supervisors, reactions to performance evaluations, satisfaction with grievance procedures and turnover intentions (Greenberg, 1990; Hubbell & Chory-Assad, 2005; Jepsen & Rodwell, 2010; Leventhal et al., 1980; Thibault & Walker, 1975). Procedural justice is sometimes considered more important than the actual outcome of a decision, especially when the outcome is unfavourable (Colquitt et al., 2001).

2.5.3 Interactional justice

Procedural justice is also influenced by the interpersonal treatment and explanations employees receive from decision makers and this is often referred to as interactional justice (Bies & Moag, 1986; Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2001; Greenberg, 1990). Interactional justice is concerned with whether or not employees perceive that they were/are treated with honesty, respect and dignity (Bies & Moag, 1986; Baldwin, 2006). Perceptions of interactional justice have been found to positively influence job satisfaction, organisational commitment and performance (Colquitt et al., 2001).

Interactional justice can be broken down into interpersonal and informational justice (Colquitt et al., 2001; Esterhuizen & Martins, 2008; Jepsen, & Rodwell, 2010). Interpersonal justice refers to the sensitivity, politeness and respect people receive from their superiors as they implement various procedures or decisions (Bakhshi et al., 2009; Colquitt et al., 2001). Informational justice refers to the extent to which information is adequately shared, communicated and explained throughout the decision making process (Colquitt et al., 2001).

2.5.4 Gender differences in organisational justice perceptions

A lot of the research on the organisational justice theory has focused on the impact of organisational justice perceptions and lack thereof. However, some of the research has also highlighted the differences between gender and organisational justice perceptions (Jepsen & Rodwell, 2010; Simpson & Kaminski, 2007; Sweeney & McFarlin, 1997). Sweeney and McFarlin (1997) conducted a quantitative study among Federal employees in America to assess gender difference in the assessment of procedural and distributive justice. They found that women and men viewed procedural and distributive justice differently. Women were more

concerned with the processes followed during the decision making process than the outcome, while men were more concerned with the final outcome of decisions made in the organisation. Sweeney and McFarlin (1997) proposed that this could be because women had to rely on formal procedures and systems to obtain various outcomes due to their history of discrimination and sex-role stereotyping that kept them out of the decision making process.

In an attempt to further understand the effect of gender on organisational justice perceptions, Lee and Farh (1999) replicated Sweeney and McFarlin's (1997) study, in a consumer products company. Unlike earlier findings by Sweeney and McFarlin, they found that women were more concerned with distributive justice than with procedural justice. They concluded that this could be because women were also interested in addressing past pay discrepancies.

According to Simpson and Kaminski's (2007) research, women reported that they received different treatment from their supervisors compared with their male counterparts, who seemed to be treated with more respect. This lack of interactional justice concerned women and was seen as more important than procedural and distributive justice. Men on the other hand placed greater emphasis on distributive and procedural justice. They argued that this could be because women were more concerned about the availability of information, information sharing and the interpersonal treatment they received from their colleagues and supervisors. In addition, their findings varied according to race. For example, they found that Black women valued interactional justice a lot more because they were concerned about being treated with dignity and respect in comparison to White women and both Black and White men. This could be because Black women are generally regarded as a minority or disadvantaged group and as they enter the workplace, they also want to feel appreciated and be treated like everyone else without being looked down on or receiving special treatment.

A quantitative research conducted by Jepsen and Rodwel (2010) also supported Simpson and Kaminski's (2007) research findings. Their research focused on examining women's knowledge of organisational justice and their perceptions of fairness in the workplace in comparison to men. They found that women and men had different responses to their perceptions of organisational justice. Although men and women reported similar levels of their perceptions of justice, for men, interpersonal justice increased their organisational commitment while procedural justice

predicted a decrease in turnover intentions. For women, informational justice increased their organisational commitment and reduced turnover intentions.

Perceptions of organisational justice are also likely to improve the status and experiences of women managers. Jamali and Nejati's (2009) investigated the relationship between Iranian women's barriers to career progression and organisational justice. They concluded that increasing distributive and interactional justice may decrease career progression barriers for women. This provides support for the need to further investigate and understand women managers' experiences of work processes and outcomes and how they relate to perceptions of organisational justice among South African women managers.

In order to gain competitive advantage, organisations must pay attention to their managers who are responsible for driving the organisation's processes and outcomes. This is why Rana, Garg and Rastogi (2011) argue that organisations must pay attention to factors that influence managers' performance and job satisfaction, such as perceptions of organisational justice. Recent research by Rana et al. (2011) investigated the effect of organisational justice perceptions on managerial effectiveness using quantitative analysis-stepwise multiple regression analysis. The research focused on examining the effect of the distribution of rewards, organisational policies and procedures and interpersonal treatment on managerial effectiveness. Rana et al. (2011) concluded from their research that organisational justice perceptions among managers increased perceived managerial effectiveness and productivity in organisations. Therefore, organisational justice perceptions can also potentially increase managers' confidence and self efficacy.

Fortin (2008), notes that one is able to understand perceptions of organisational justice by examining contextual factors and employees' past and current experiences. Therefore, taking into account South African women managers' past and current experiences, the research set out to investigate how South African women managers' experiences are related to their perceptions of organisational justice. In doing so, the study would be contributing to limited research on perceptions of organisational justice among South African women managers.

2.6 Leadership Self Efficacy Theory

Leadership has been defined as a process of social influence directed towards achieving a common objective (Paglis & Green, 2002). Leadership self-efficacy refers to the confidence that one has in his/her knowledge, skills and abilities to lead others and accomplish various leadership tasks (Hannah, et al., 2008; McCormick et al., 2002; Paglis, 2010). Leadership self-efficacy is an extension of Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory. According to this theory, self-efficacy describes an individual's belief in his or her own ability to succeed in a particular task or situation (Bandura, 1977; Paglis, 2010; McCormick, Tanguma & Lopez-Forment, 2002; Trent, 2003). It is therefore subjective, because it refers to one's personal belief about their abilities (McCormick et al., 2002).

Hannah et al. (2008) stress the importance of having leadership self-efficacy because the leadership role is demanding and challenges one's knowledge, skills and capabilities. In addition, leadership self-efficacy has been found to be a necessary component of effective leadership and to contribute to successful leadership performance (Anderson, Krajewski, Goffin, & Jackson, 2008; Chemers, Watson, & May, 2000; McCormick, 2002; Schyns & Sanders, 2005). Leadership self-efficacy is therefore necessary for South African women managers to be effective and successful managers.

2.6.1 Impact of leadership self-efficacy

Perceptions of efficacy influence an individual's behaviour, choices, aspirations, stress levels, anxiety, coping abilities, effort and perseverance during difficult times (Bussey & Bandura, 1999; Hackett & Betz 1981; Paglis & Green, 2002). Those with high levels of leadership self-efficacy are generally described as motivated, persistent, goal-oriented and resilient (Combs, 2002; McCormick et al., 2002; Ng, Ang, & Chan, 2002). In addition, they tend to blame themselves for their failures and see failures as a result of insufficient effort and inadequate strategies, while those of low efficacy blame their failures on low ability and control over their situation (Bussey & Bandura, 1999). Bussey and Bandura, (1999) also note that those with a high sense of efficacy can sometimes become frustrated if they feel that there is limited opportunities to make full use of their full potential.

Previous research has demonstrated that women's leadership aspirations are negatively affected by the presence of stereotype threat (Hoyt and Blascovich, 2007; Santovec, 2010). As a result, self efficacy is believed to be helpful for women in overcoming gender related obstacles (Hoyt & Blascovich, 2007; Santovec, 2010).

Hoyt and Blascovich (2007) conducted a quantitative study on female students to examine how stereotypes impact on women leaders and influence their leadership abilities and confidence. In particular, they observed the role of leadership self-efficacy in women's responses to stereotype threats. They found that leadership self-efficacy moderated the effects of stereotype threat on women. Women with high self-efficacy showed positive responses to stereotype threats, maintained a positive attitude and continued to perform successfully in their job despite the discrimination and challenges they were exposed to. On the other hand, those with low self-efficacy continued to have difficulty with overcoming their challenges and meeting goals. Similar findings were reported by Lipka (2008), Houle, Chiocchio, Favreau and Villeneuve (2009) and Santovec (2010). When interpreting these findings, it is also important to be cautious as these studies were all conducted among university students and not in an organisational context. However, it is clear that promoting leadership self-efficacy among women managers is important as this may enable them to be more confident in their roles and to deal effectively with their work experiences, both negative and positive.

2.6.2 Gender differences in leadership self-efficacy

McCormick et al. (2002) conducted a quantitative research study to assess gender differences on leadership self-efficacy levels and on experiences with leadership roles. They found that overall, women reported lower leadership confidence or leadership self-efficacy than men, despite having similar education and work experience with their male colleagues. Other research also supported this finding (Chesterman et al., 2004; Hackett & Betz, 1981; Mathur-Helm, 2005; Morrison, 1992; Tsui, 1998). In addition, women have been found to attribute their successes to luck or the help of others rather than to their own capabilities and to under-reward themselves (McCormick et al., 2002; Sweeney & McFarlin, 1997). McCormick et al. (2002) and Santovec (2010) note that women's low levels of leadership self-efficacy may act as a barrier to women's success.

However, Bussey and Bandura (1999) argue that women do not necessarily have low levels of self-efficacy but are more efficacious in some roles than men, especially traditionally gendered women occupations, than they are towards traditionally male gendered occupations. For example, they state that women may have low self-efficacy on their quantitative or technical abilities which are believed to be traditionally male gendered roles than on more social and traditional female gendered roles. This, they add, also determines their occupational preferences. Schein (2001) also believes that women, just as men, have the ability to take on managerial roles and be successful. In addition, a look at the growth of women in management and leadership positions makes it difficult to conclude that women are less confident than men. Jacobs, (1989, as cited by Bussey & Bandura, 1999) also states that women continue to educate themselves more extensively and to develop their efficacy, competencies and interests in order to succeed in traditionally male dominated roles.

Women managers are not necessarily less confident than men, but their work experiences may threaten their leadership self-efficacy (Sloma-Williams, McDade, Richman, & Moraha, 2009). For example, the lack of female role models, the continued presence of gender stereotypes and insufficient organisational support threaten women managers' self-efficacy (Hackett & Betz 1981; Sealy, 2010). Skinner (2012) adds that women managers working in male dominated environments are likely to have their self-efficacy challenged as they may lack adequate experiences and role models to learn from. Given the right support and encouragement, more women managers will be able to utilise their individual capabilities and talents, and increase their confidence to become successful managers (Hackett & Betz 1981; Omar & Ogenyi, 2004; Sloma-Williams et al., 2009). Given the history of women in South Africa, particularly in the workplace, it is therefore important to investigate how South African women managers' experiences in the workplace are linked to their perceptions of leadership self-efficacy.

2.6.3 Developing and promoting leadership self-efficacy

According to Bandura (1977), self-efficacy develops from performance accomplishment, vicarious experience or modelling, positive feedback and physiological conditions (Bussey & Bandura, 1999; McCormick et al., 2002; Paglis & Green, 2002). Schott (2004) also found support for Bandura's sources of self-efficacy. She found that mentoring, coaching, role modelling and positive performance feedback also contributed to self-efficacy. Wang (2007) also

notes that positive informal feedback from subordinates and team accomplishments also contributed to leadership self-efficacy.

However, it is becoming clear that other contextual and underlying factors can contribute to the development of self-efficacy (Paglis, 2010). Few researchers have investigated additional factors that may contribute to leadership self-efficacy besides the main sources proposed by Bandura (Ng, Ang & Chan, 2008; Paglis & Green 2002; Schyns & Sczesny, 2010). This makes it valuable to investigate other contextual factors such as perceptions of work processes and outcomes and how they are related to their perceptions of leadership self-efficacy.

Research by Schyns & Sczesny (2010) attempted to investigate underlying factors that may contribute to leadership self-efficacy such as leadership-relevant attributes among management student, other than the main sources of self-efficacy such as performance accomplishment, feedback and vicarious experience or modelling. These students were regarded as future managers who did not have any occupational managerial or leadership experience. They found that leadership-relevant attributes were related to leadership self-efficacy as there were positive relationships between task- and person-oriented attributes and leadership self-efficacy. This relationship between self-descriptions and leadership self-efficacy supported the view that there are other underlying factors that can be linked to leadership self-efficacy and should be considered in developing self-efficacy among future managers. Although this finding is valuable, it was conducted among university students in Australia, Germany and India only. This makes it difficult to generalise findings to an organisational setting and to other societies and cultures.

Paglis and Green (2002) have also attempted to investigate other factors that may contribute to the development of leadership self-efficacy other than the four main sources of efficacy proposed by Bandura (1977). They conducted a quantitative research on the relationship between job autonomy, resource availability, organisational culture and leadership self-efficacy. Job autonomy entails greater control over tasks such as managing budgets, selecting staff members, and organising work flow between units. The availability of resources indicated the availability of funds, staff and equipment and supportive organisational culture referred to the availability of support and encouragement in their role (Paglis & Green, 2002). They found that the degree of job autonomy, the availability of resources and the presence of a supportive organisational

culture influenced leadership self-efficacy among managers. In addition, individual and organisational characteristics such as self-esteem and support from subordinates and superiors also contributed to leadership self efficacy.

Trent (2003) adds that there are various ways in which leadership self-efficacy can be improved such as providing task-specific feedback, reducing conflict and role ambiguity, encouraging participation and involvement and openness in decision making. It is therefore evident that various individual characteristics, organisational contexts, work processes and outcomes can be linked to the development and maintenance of leadership self-efficacy perceptions.

2.7 Linking perceptions of organisational justice and leadership self-efficacy

The above literature review has provided a discussion of women managers' experiences and perceptions of organisational justice and leadership self-efficacy. It is evident that South African women seem to be progressing into managerial positions at a slow pace and continue to experience various challenges as women managers (Molebatsi, 2009; Paulsen, 2009). Some of the experiences described above have the potential of making women managers question their perceptions of justice or fairness in the organisation and their perceptions of leadership self-efficacy. This warranted the need to investigate women managers' experiences and their perceptions of work processes and outcomes further, in order to determine how they are related to their perceptions of organisational justice. In addition, it is also clear from the above that these experiences challenge women managers' confidence in their leadership or managerial roles. Therefore, it was also important to understand the relationship between women managers' experiences and perceptions of leadership self-efficacy in the South African context.

Literature has also shown that organisational justice perceptions among managers increased their perceived managerial effectiveness and productivity in organisations. In addition, various individual characteristics, organisational contexts, work processes and outcomes that determine perceptions of organisational justice can be linked to the development and maintenance of leadership self-efficacy perceptions. For example, Trent (2003) indicates that there are various ways in which leadership self-efficacy can be improved such as, through providing task-specific feedback, reducing conflict and role ambiguity, encouraging participation and involvement and

openness in decision making. This suggests that organisational justice perceptions can also potentially increase managers' confidence and self-efficacy.

Therefore, by evaluating literature on women managers, it is evident that their experiences contribute to their perceptions of organisational justice and leadership self-efficacy and that their perceptions of organisational justice and leadership self-efficacy may be linked. It is therefore important that organisations be aware of women managers' experiences and so that they are able to find ways of ensuring organisational justice and of promoting their leadership self-efficacy to enable them to develop and be successful in their leadership roles.

2.8 Aim of Research

The literature review has highlighted some of the limitations with past research studies, which this research aims to address. First, most of the research conducted on perceptions of organisational justice and leadership self-efficacy has been quantitative and most researchers have used students as their sample. Therefore, this research aims to provide a deeper understanding of senior women managers' experiences and perceptions of organisational justice and leadership self efficacy through in-depth interviews with senior women managers.

Second, the research will investigate how these experiences are linked to women managers' perceptions of organisational justice and perceptions of leadership self-efficacy. These two objectives of the study are brought about by the fact that literature shows that perceptions of organisational justice are evaluated based on employee's experiences in the workplace such as work context, processes, outcomes, interpersonal relations and the presence of organisational support. In addition, research has also shown that some of the experiences that women have in the workplace may increase or threaten their perceptions of leadership self-efficacy.

Lastly, the research will explore how these two constructs-perceptions of organisational justice and leadership self-efficacy-interplay or might be perceived as linked. This is because since organisational justice is determined by perceptions of work processes and outcomes, these work processes and outcomes may also contribute to the development and maintenance of leadership self-efficacy perceptions. This research will therefore add to the growing but limited research on women managers' leadership self-efficacy and to understanding additional factors that may be

related to and contribute to leadership self-efficacy (Hannah, et al., 2008; McCormick et al., 2002; Paglis, 2010; Paglis & green, 2002; Schyns & Szesny, 2010).

Throughout the process, the research will also highlight what organisations are doing to support the development of South African women managers. This is because the presence or absence of organisational support influences how women managers perceive their work experience, organisational justice and leadership self-efficacy.

This research also aims to provide organisations with an understanding of how women managers' experiences and challenges relate to their perceptions of organisational and leadership self-efficacy justice among women managers. Understanding women managers' experience and challenges will hopefully enable organisations to find ways of supporting women managers effectively and helping them overcome the challenges they face. In addition, this research may enable organisations to understand the importance of promoting and ensuring justice and fairness in the workplace. It is also hoped that this research will assist organisations in findings ways to develop and support their women managers and help them develop and maintain their leadership self-efficacy and be comfortable and confident in their role as managers. Ultimately, it is hoped that this may lead to increased job performance and leadership effectiveness among women managers.

2.9 Research Questions

The primary research questions for this study are:

- What are women managers' experiences in the organisation?
- How do these experiences relate to their perceptions of organisational justice?
- What are their perceptions of their leadership self-efficacy?
- How to these experiences relate to their perceptions of leadership self-efficacy?
- What is the perceived link between women managers' perceptions of organisational justice and perceptions of leadership self-efficacy?

Chapter 3 Research Methodology

The chapter provides a description of how the research was conducted and discusses the processes that were followed in collecting and analysing data. The researcher also considers potential limitations of this research and reflects on the processes undertaken throughout this study.

3.1 Research Design

In order to explore women managers' experiences and their perceptions of organisational justice and leadership self-efficacy, the research used the qualitative approach. Qualitative research makes it possible to get a deeper understanding of a particular topic as the researcher can interact personally with participants and have them openly describe their feelings, attitudes, perceptions and experiences (Martins, 2005). This was evident in this research because most of the research participants were able to express and be specific about their feelings and thoughts about their experiences and making it possible to get a deeper understanding of their experiences and their impact. Martins (2005) adds that, qualitative research is appropriate when the topic or issue investigated is sensitive, confidential or stressful. This approach therefore seemed appropriate for exploring women managers' experiences in the workplace because as discussed in the literature review (and as the research revealed), some of the experiences that women have are sensitive and vary according to one's background. As a result, some of the women, for example, women of different races, may not have felt comfortable to discuss freely their own experiences in front of other women, out of fear of being misunderstood or judged.

3.2 Research Sample

Purposive sampling, which is a non-probability sampling technique, was used to identify suitable participants for this study. Non-probability sampling techniques are used in qualitative research especially because the focus was not to get a representative sample of the population, but rather to get particular participants that were available and were a specific profile to participate in the research (Tustin, Ligthelm, Martins, & Van Wyk, 2005). The criteria for this study were that participants had to be South African women; senior managers; working in a private organisation;

and based in the Gauteng province. The researcher initially contacted three senior women managers she knew personally and invited them to participate in the study, with the hope that they would also get access into their organisations and recruit participants from there. However, only two of these women were willing to participate in the study. However, they could only schedule the interviews to take place in about 4 weeks due to their work commitments. Given the time frame for collecting data, it was important to re-strategise. As a result, the snowball sampling method was used to identify other potential participants. Snowballing involves using referrals from potential participants or those interviewed to identify other suitable participants (Kelly, 1999b; Tustin, Ligthelm, Martins, & Van Wyk, 2005). Snowballing was useful in this study because it was not only difficult to identify and get access to women senior managers but it was also difficult to get them to agree to participate in the study. Most senior women managers that were approached showed a keen interest in the study but because most of them were busy with work commitments or had to travel, they could not confirm their availability. In some cases, it took about 2 weeks to set up an appointment to conduct the interview.

The use of snowball sampling together with the time constraints for collecting data made it a bit difficult for the researcher to have full control of who participated in the research study. For example, the researcher found that White women managers often referred other White women managers and Black women managers also did the same. Further the women also referred their friends or previous colleagues that also worked in the private sector, meaning that the sample comprised only of women working in the private sector. However, through snowballing and the use of referrals from participants that were interviewed, the researcher was able to interview eight senior women managers.

These women came from different industries, namely Information Technology, Banking and Finance. The participants were between the ages of 36 and 52, and the racial composition of the participants was five White women and three Black women. All the participants had a few years of managerial experience, and their work experience as senior managers ranged from two years to ten years. They were all currently working as senior managers, had a few line managers or team leaders reporting to them whom they managed and had similar scope of responsibilities including being part of the strategic planning and management of their organisation. These senior

managers reported to either the Chief Executive Officers, Managing Directors, Group Directors, Regional Manager or General Managers of their organisations. Table 1 provides a profile of the participants. Department heads or heads of departments

Table 1 Profile of Participants - Senior Women Managers

Interviewees (Pseudonyms)	Age	Race	Job Title	Senior Managerial Experience
Pauline	45	White	Senior Consultant – Sales and Client Services	8 years
Ester	52	White	Senior Information and Research Manager	10 years
Lindi	37	Black	Head : Card Human Resources-Retail	4 years
Susan	39	Black	Senior HR Manager	5 years
Tshidi	36	Black	Senior IT and Audit Manager	2 years
Mary	40	White	Senior Accounting Officer	3 years
Natasha	43	White	Sales Manager	6 years
Sally	47	White	Senior Manager - Marketing	7 years

3.3 Research Instruments

Data was collected by conducting one-on-one in-depth semi-structured interviews with senior women managers. An interview involves asking research participants questions relevant to the research topic as this makes it possible to get a better understanding of how people think and feel (Blanche & Kelly, 1999). In-depth interviews were appropriate for this study because some of the questions asked were sensitive and may have made others uncomfortable if they had had to share their work experiences in front of others, for example, in a focus group (Tustin, Ligthelm, Martins, & Van Wyk, 2005). In addition, given that most of these women managers were busy,

it would have been difficult to have them all available at the same time for a focus group meeting. One-on-one in-depth interviews also provide depth and richness of data and participants do not have peer pressure to conform to societal or other norms as they are not interviewed in front of other people (Tustin, Ligthelm, Martins, & Van Wyk, 2005).

The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews using an interview guide with a list of key questions to be discussed during the interview (see Appendix A). Blanche and Kelly (1999) state that having an interview guide ensures that all necessary topics and subtopics are covered and explored during the interview and helps to direct the interview. However, the interview remains flexible, as there was no specified order in which the questions were asked and this made it possible for the interviewer to probe (Martins, 2005; Tustin, Ligthelm, Martins, & Van Wyk, 2005). As a result, the researcher used in-depth questioning and probing in order to get a deeper understanding of the experiences and challenges women senior managers face and how they relate to their perceptions of organisational justice and leadership self-efficacy. For the researcher, probing was not easy in the first few interviews due to lack of experience in interviewing and sometimes the women failed to elaborate further even after the researcher had probed. However, because each interview was recorded using a tape recorder, the researcher was able to listen to the recordings after each interview and identify where she could have probed more. This made it possible to improve the technique of probing in subsequent interviews.

3.4 Research procedure

The researcher emailed each potential participant the information participant sheet (see Appendix B) which detailed information about the study. All in all, the researcher made contact with about 14 potential women managers but managed to secure eight interviews with senior women managers and these interviews were carried out over a period of 7 weeks. Once participants read through the participant information sheet and agreed to participate in the study, the researcher asked them to consent to being interviewed and to have the interview recorded using a tape recorder. Tape recorders make it possible to capture all the data without being distracted by note-taking and this adds to the richness of data collected (Blanche & Kelly, 1999). It also made it possible to capture actual words spoken by participants which were used to support findings and conclusions. However, the researcher still made a few important notes

during the interview, especially of what the interviewee needed to clarify or expand on later on, before the interview was over.

Generally participants were comfortable and relaxed with the idea of being recorded and even when the tape recorder was turned off, they still remained relaxed. Perhaps some of these women were used to being interviewed and recorded. There was just one case where the participant stated that she was not comfortable with being recorded and therefore decided not to take part in the study. However, the researcher was fortunate enough to get another referral to take part in the study. As a result, two consent forms—one to confirm willingness to participate in the study, the other to agree to have the interview recorded—were emailed to participants to be signed and returned to the researcher (see Appendix C and Appendix D).

Once consent forms were signed, the researcher proceeded to set up meetings with each participant from their place of work. All interviews were conducted face to face. The researcher met each participant at their place of work, and conducted the interviews in one of the boardrooms from the participant's workplace to ensure privacy and to minimise disturbances during the interviews. The researcher introduced herself and briefed the participant about the research. Each participant was then asked to complete the demographic questionnaire (Appendix E). This demographic questionnaire was used to collect biographical information which was used to describe the sample and to some extent, make it possible to make comparisons among participants. Although this was not the aim of the research, the literature review had revealed that women are not a homogeneous group and therefore some of their experiences could vary. The demographic questionnaire included information such as age, race, managerial experience, length of service in the current position and in the organisation, marital status, number of children, and number of employees supervised. This information was also important because it made it possible to understand other factors that influence senior women managers' experiences.

The researcher took a few minutes to assure each participant that pseudonyms would be used to ensure anonymity and that confidentiality would be maintained as no mention of their personal information or name of organisation would be mentioned in the research report. The researcher started each interview by asking more general questions about the participants work to put them at ease, before getting to more specific and sensitive questions about their experiences as senior managers, their perceptions of justice or fairness in the organisation, their work relationships and

their specific leadership role. Since this was a semi-structured interview, it was possible to probe and create questions as the interviews went on to ensure that participants explained in depth their feelings and experiences. The interviews took between 38 and 72 minutes. Lastly, participants were thanked for their participation, and were reminded that they would receive a copy of the final research report once the research was complete. The researcher also found that generally the participants were comfortable to talk about their experiences and feelings and did not hold back. What was also pleasant was that almost at the end of each interview, participants always acknowledged how they enjoyed the interviews with remarks such as “It was nice to reflect.....” and “it’s nice to just talk to someone sometimes....”.

3.5 Data Analysis

Each interview recording was saved onto a secure computer under a pseudonym. The researcher then proceeded with transcribing each interview, one at a time. In the process, the researcher started to get a feel of the data collected. It is also important to note that while transcribing each interview recording, the researcher started to slowly analyse data. This was done by jotting down any themes or thoughts that came to mind while transcribing each interview.

Thematic content analysis was used to analyse the transcribed data. Thematic content analysis is a data analysis technique for qualitative research. Braun and Clarke (2006) define thematic content analysis as, “a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (Braun & Clarke, 2006 p.79). These themes are seen as words or phrases identified from the data that relate to the research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The researcher followed steps provided by Braun and Clarke (2006) when conducting thematic content analysis. First, the researcher read through each interview transcript over and over again to familiarise with the data and made notes of any patterns and issues that were emerging. Second, data was categorised and coded and in the process, potential themes and sub-themes were identified and labelled. However, these themes were reviewed again in order to eliminate redundancies, overlaps and inaccuracies. Lastly, each theme was refined and defined properly and where relevant, interrelations between themes were revealed. The researcher was also able to establish possible links between themes and literature, as suggested by Blanche and Kelly (1999).

It is important to note that the researcher did not pre-determine categories or themes and sub-themes before collecting and analysing the data. The categories and final themes and sub-themes that are presented in this research report were informed by the data that was collected. This is why it was important for the researcher to read through the data thoroughly and analytically in order to identify the similarities and differences from the data collected and therefore identify important themes and sub-themes.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

Participants always need to be fully informed about the research before deciding whether or not to take part in the research study (Oliver, 2010). Therefore, each potential participant was provided with a participant information sheet, detailing the aim, purpose and procedure of the research. Kelly (1999b) and Blanche and Kelly (1999) also note the importance of getting participants' informed consent to participate in the study and to have the interview recorded because some people may not be comfortable with being recorded, as the researcher witnessed while conducting this research. Participation in the study was voluntary and participants were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time, giving them freedom and autonomy (Oliver, 2010).

Participants were also assured that confidentiality and anonymity would be maintained in reporting the research findings as only the researcher would have access to the original recordings. However, the transcripts would be made available to the supervisor. Further, pseudonyms instead of real names were used to identify participants and candidates were not asked to provide their full names or Identity Numbers. Oliver (2010) notes that this also helps to ensure anonymity. The original recordings were destroyed once the study was complete, while the sanitised transcripts were maintained and stored safely indefinitely. The participants were provided with the researcher's contact details, in case they wanted to add any information related to the research. The study was approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee (non-medical) of the University of Witwatersrand and an ethic clearance certificate was granted before data was collected (Appendix F).

3.7 Reliability and Validity of Data

When conducting qualitative research, the researcher is seen as the research instrument (Golafshani, 2003). As a result, the researcher's involvement throughout the process influences the research process, the findings and the interpretation of the research findings (Ashworth, 2003). It is therefore important to address factors that can produce a sound research and ensure that the research is credible, transferable, dependable and confirmable (Golafshani, 2003; Kelly, 1999a).

Credibility refers to the degree to which the research is sound, believable and convincing; transferability is concerned with the extent to which research findings can be generalised to other settings or contexts; dependability or consistency seeks to ensure that the findings occurred as the researcher says they did and confirmability refers to the extent to which findings are not based on personal biases, motivations or interests (Kelly, 1999a).

One way of ensuring that the research is credible, transferable, dependable and confirmable is through triangulation. This involves collecting data in many different ways or from many diverse sources and multitude of perspectives (Blanche & Kelly, 1999; Kelly, 1999a). This was not possible in this current research as it would have been time consuming and would have required additional resources. Other techniques were therefore used to ensure that the research was credible, transferable, dependable and confirmable

To ensure credibility and reliability for example, the researcher tried to remain unbiased through the data collecting process by asking open-ended questions. In addition, as suggested by Kelly (1999a), direct quotes were used in order to minimise subjectivity and to provide support for the findings and interpretation of data. Blanche and Kelly (1999) also note that to ensure the reliability of the transcription, the transcribed data must be read through while listening to the recording. The researcher therefore continuously read through the transcribed data while listening to the recording to make certain that she had captured the words spoken accurately. Further, the research process was monitored thoroughly and the researcher tried to provide detailed information on the research procedures used to try to ensure that the research is transferable. As a result, the researcher kept a reflexive journal, which is a form of an audit trail

(Kelly, 1999a). This provided a detailed account of what was done at each phase of the research process and why it was done, what changed, how data was collected, cleaned, analysed, how participants were questioned, how data was summarised and interpreted. To ensure confirmability, the research supervisor was also involved throughout the research process, especially when it came to interpreting the research findings.

To ensure that the researcher collected useful, valid and reliable data, the researcher had to develop confidence and effective listening, questioning and interpreting skills as suggested by Blanche and Kelly (1999). During the first interview for example, the researcher was a bit nervous, interrupted the interviewee a few times and just let the interview go on and on. As a result, the interview was very long, just over 70mins. However, as the researcher conducted more interviews, she was more confident and relaxed, and probed where necessary, while also directing the interview appropriately to ensure that useful information was collected.

3.8 Limitations

There were a few limitations with this study. Interviews also pose some challenges. One of them is that they are self-reported methods and anonymity is not possible in a face-to-face interview. This might lead to participants giving socially desirable responses. This limitation was addressed by assuring participants that confidentiality would be maintained and pseudonyms would be used. In addition, because the researcher used a semi-structured interview technique, she was able to probe into any issues raised for clarification purposes.

Another limitation of this study was that it focused mainly on women managers in the private sector. This however, was because the researcher used personal contacts and referrals that happened to work in private organisations. Research on women managers' experiences conducted overseas shows that there are some differences between women managers' experiences in the public and private sector (Chesterman et al., 2004). Future research could investigate these differences and how they may relate to senior women managers' perceptions of organisational justice and leadership self-efficacy. At the moment, this is beyond the scope of this research.

Chapter 4 Findings and Discussions

4.1 Introduction

The aim of the research was to investigate how senior women managers' experiences relate to their perceptions of organisational justice and perceptions of leadership self-efficacy, and to establish the perceived link between perceptions of organisational justice and leadership self-efficacy. This chapter therefore, provides a discussion of the research findings on senior women managers' experiences, how they relate to their perceptions of organisational justice and leadership self-efficacy, and the perceived link between these two constructs.

In doing so, the chapter discusses the main themes that emerged after the thematic content analysis of the data obtained from interviewing senior women managers. The themes presented below were therefore not pre-determined before data was collected and analysed. Instead, these themes were informed by the data that was collected. Therefore, given that the themes that follow came from the analysis, each section below is presented in a way that provides a deeper discussion of each of the themes by providing links between the different sub-themes and themes that emerged from the analysis. The themes reflected senior women managers' experiences from the time they were selected into their current senior positions. These themes also revealed how these women managers felt about being part of senior management, the support they received in their management role, their work relationships, the organisations' work processes and outcomes and their leadership role and abilities. Therefore, each theme presented discusses the extent to which each positive and negative experience may be linked to their perceptions of organisational justice and perceptions of leadership self-efficacy. In addition, the perceived link between perceptions of organisational justice and perceptions of leadership self-efficacy is also discussed.

4.2 Selection and promotion into Senior Managerial positions

For those in junior management positions, selection and promotion into senior management positions can be desirable for some as it may reflect one's potential and contributes to their career advancement and personal satisfaction (Liff, 2001). The women in this study confirmed this. For the most part, the women in this study were promoted into their current senior positions

from their previous positions as line managers and viewed the promotion positively, and as sign of recognition for their previous work performance.

However, for some, this transition was challenging, as it affected their relationship with some of their colleagues. Sally, a White Senior Marketing Manager with 7 years of work experience in a senior management role stated:

“It was actually a difficult transition. For them initially I was a colleague and now I had to be a manager. For them it was actually not easy. They still saw me as a colleague, so I had to explain to them that I am no longer a colleague now I am a manager so we need to respect each other and they needed to know when to draw the line...but I think they have now gotten used to it” (Interview, Sally, 25 September 2012).

For Sally, it was important that her colleagues respected and supported her as their new manager as this would make her management and leadership role easier. Her colleagues needed to respect her and take instructions from her as she was now their new manager.

Only three of the managers interviewed joined their current organisations as senior managers, and had to go through various selection processes. They all perceived the selection process to be fair. For example, Pauline a Senior Consultant handling Sales and Client Services for an international financial institution stated:

“The whole thing was done professionally” (Interview, Pauline, 4 October 2012).

Pauline had about 9 years of work experience as a senior manager in various organisations. She had been with her current organisation for about 3 years, and as she described the selection process she went through, it was clear that she remembered all the details of the process also because she had been excited about the opportunity to join her current organisation.

However, although Mary, a White Senior Accounting Officer with about 3 years of senior management experience, also thought the selection process seemed fair, she recalled that the interview and the actual job were different by making the following statement:

“When you go for an interview the job is never like a job interview...so what you get is never what you were expecting” (Interview, Mary, 4 October 2012).

Mary later found that there were actually more responsibilities expected from her than what she had been told during the interview. This clearly bothered her because as she went on to describe

her main duties and responsibilities, she referred to certain expectations that her superiors had from her which had not been clarified before she joined the organisation, for example, having certain sales targets to meet.

Liff and Ward's (2001) research on women managers' views of promotion decisions into senior management positions revealed that selection and promotion decisions were sometimes seen as unclear and subjective. Their study revealed that women (and men) perceived the selection and promotional processes and decisions to be unclear and depended on personal contacts and subjective decision-making. However in this study, all senior women managers perceived the selection and promotional processes and decisions to be professional and fair and this reflected procedural and distributive justice. It is therefore important that women managers' selection and promotion is unbiased and that women are given appropriate reward for their performance and accomplishment in order to increase their confidence (Jamali & Nejati, 2009), and their leadership self-efficacy. This highlights the fact that fairness in various employment processes not only impacts on perceptions of organisational justice, but also on their perceptions of leadership self-efficacy. Furthermore, this is also an indication of the link between perceptions of organisation justice and leadership self-efficacy.

4.3 Representation of Women in Management

Research on women managers over the years has shown that South African women continue to be underrepresented in senior management positions (Booyen & Nkomo, 2010; BWASA, 2011; Mathur-Helm, 2005, 2006; Mabokela, 2000). The women in this study also acknowledged that they found themselves in male dominated senior management positions. Pauline provides the following description of the organisations' management:

“Well, on my level, as in where my colleagues and I sit with the various managers and senior managers, the leadership team is 80% men and only 20% women ” (Interview, Pauline, 4 October 2012).

According to Pauline, the leadership team was far from being representative in terms of gender and for her to give specific proportions of the leadership team in terms of the gender composition indicated that she was very conscious of the imbalances in the leadership team.

Similar observations were made by Ester. Ester was Senior Information and Research Manager with just over 10 years of senior management experience in a local Information Technology Company. She described the leadership composition of the organisation as largely dominated by males by stating the following:

“I am often the only female in the group’ (Interview, Ester, 24 August, 2012).

Despite often being the only females other male managers, both Pauline and Ester indicated that they had become used to working in male dominated environments and for them, it appeared to be the norm which they seemed to have accepted. This concurs with Liff and Ward (2001) and Omar & Ogenyi’s (2004) observation that because women managers often find themselves as a minority in male dominated environments, they sometimes end up adapting and conforming to how things are in order to be accepted and fit in.

However, Sally was more outspoken about the lack of more senior women managers in her organisation as she stated:

“I am the only female senior manager in the team....I met with a recruitment agent the other day about a vacancy we have and I just told her that we need to get a female on board.....” (Interview, Sally, 25 September 2012).

For Sally, being the only senior manager at times made her feel lonely and isolated and hence she highlighted the need to employ more senior women managers. Having been entrusted with the responsibility of recruiting a new senior manager to join the team was Sally’s opportunity to address the lack of women senior women managers in the organisation.

Research shows that because women managers are often a minority, they are likely to experience discrimination in the workplace (Booyesen & Nkomo, 2010; Chuma & Ncube, 2010; Mathur-Helm, 2006). A few women, especially black women stated that they perceived some form of racial (and sometimes gender) discrimination in the workplace. For example, Tshidi, a Senior IT and Audit Manager for two years shared her sentiments by stating the following:

“... I think the fact that companies and (name of the company)...we go out there and say we want to transform the corporate landscape...we want to bring in senior black women...or whatever colour or gender...but I don’t think we make it very conducive or friendly for that matter” (Interview, Tshidi, 11 September 2012).

It was clear from Tshidi's statement that she felt that the organisation was paying lip-service when it came to issues of transformation in the workplace and did not fully incorporate Black women. Her perception of transformation was that the organisation was more concerned about increasing the numbers of black women and not actually about ensuring that women were fully integrated into the organisation. This findings concurs with Marthur-Helm (2005) and Sealy's (2010) findings that sometimes the appointment of women is viewed as token appointments by both men and women and as attempts to meet certain quotas as per labour regulation requirements. This means that women, especially Black women, sometimes perceive interactional (interpersonal and informational) injustice in the organisation because they find their work environment to be unfavourable. In addition, having women in senior management positions for purposes of merely reaching certain targets may impact negatively on these women's perceptions of leadership self-efficacy they may sometimes be made to feel that they do not deserve or have what it take to be leaders or managers.

Lindi who had been working as the Head of Card Human Resources-Retail for about four years for a banking institution shared the same feelings as Tshidi by stating:

"Sometimes I find that there is still a little sense of unity it's like, there is still the blacks, there and the whites there..." (Interview, Lindi, 17 September 2012).

For Lindi, the reality was that the workplace was still very much racially segregated despite efforts being made to transform the organisation. Esterhuizen and Martins (2008) and Mathur-Helm (2005) also reached similar conclusions in their research. They both noted that there was still a lack of commitment from management to effectively implement and manage employment equity legislation and failure to manage workplace diversity appropriately.

Although Lindi made reference to the racial segregation in the organisation, she seemed to have accepted this as she also found herself fitting in more and bonding with the other Black managers. However, for Susan, because most of her colleagues were White, she often felt left out among her White colleagues, both men and women. Susan, a Senior Human Resources Manager with 5 years of senior management experience provided the following description of her experience with her current management team.

“So in terms of the race and gender again, I’ll tell you, when I joined the team, or rather in the teams, now there is two actually 3 other females and I remember when I started I remember thinking...and the other ones are largely white males...I remember thinking I was gonna be closer to Debby and Michelle the two other females who are both white, and it didn’t happen like that at all. So I thought, I’m gonna find some comfort or some allegiance or something with the few other females that are in the group and no...that didn’t happen” (Interview, Susan, 27 September 2012).

According to Susan, fitting in with the rest of the managers was based more on race than gender because she felt that people of similar races had more in common and therefore would understand each other better. As the only Black woman in most of her leadership teams, she often felt left out. She made a distinction between working in a team where she was not the only Black female and did not feel like an outsider and where she was the only Black woman and was often made to feel isolated. Susan’s description illustrates how race still plays an important role in the workplace, even among women themselves. Her experiences correlate with Marthur-Helm’s (2005) and Booysen and Nkomo’s (2010) finding that Black women are still the most marginalised, reflecting that women are not a homogenous group.

Esterhuizen and Martins’ (2008) and Mathur-Helm (2005) recognise that it is management’s role to ensure that corrective labour policies such as Employment Equity (EE) and Affirmative Action (AA) are administered appropriately to avoid having a negative effect on the people they are intended for. The Black women in this study also stated that they expected top management, or their superiors to step in and do more to assist them and to help them feel accepted and more comfortable in their positions and with their colleagues. This is because these women were often left feeling reserved and isolated and felt that their ideas were easily shut down. Tshidi shared her thoughts about what she expected from her superior in this situation:

“So I think this is where I expect leadership or my manager in this and in my case to quell these things and say no that’s not acceptable” (Interview, Tshidi, 11 September 2012).

To an extent, Tshidi was expressing some of her frustrations because she felt that little was being done by her superior to support her when she was being sidelined. Her frustrations could also be attributed to the fact that she felt she could not fully participate in discussions and decision-making with the management team as much as she would have liked to. She did not feel that she was making full use of her full potential. This could explain why Bussey and Bandura (1999)

note that women who are efficacious are sometimes frustrated with the limited opportunities they have to make full use their potential. As a result, Tshidi expected her manager to be able to quell or control the meetings and discussions that took place to ensure that everyone's view were taken into consideration and that no one was left feeling isolated.

Although Susan shared the same frustrations as Tshidi about the lack of support from her manager to be fully integrated into the management team, she elaborated her perception of a good leader when dealing with people from diverse backgrounds by stating the following:

“I believe a good leader should be there to say, to protect these people and say ‘we have brought in so and so and she clearly is not like them’,...and as a leader and as a good leader, you should be able to gauge such nuances in a meeting and manage them, and call people to order and ask them to not talk like that” (Interview, Susan, 27 September 2012).

For Susan, the lack of good leadership and support from her superiors contributed to the lack of respect Black women received and to the marginalisation of those previously disadvantaged, especially Black women. In addition, the perception that these women had of not being treated with respect and dignity at times reflected interactional injustice. This is perhaps why Esterhuizen and Martins (2008) concluded from their research that management should not only focus on meeting Employment Equity and Affirmative Action targets but should also focus on providing ensuring organisational justice in the workplace, treating all employees fairly and eliminating any form of discrimination.

Unlike, Lindi, Tshidi and Susan's perceptions and experiences of racial segregation and discrimination, Ester did not perceive racial discrimination in the organisation. Ester attributed the challenges she faced in her current position to be because of certain organisational issues and not because of racial discrimination. She said the following:

“I must say that I don't feel discriminated in any way, absolutely not at all. It's mainly organisational issues, there is no discrimination that I feel, I don't feel any racial discrimination, but I'm talking because they are two white in the organisation and it must have an impact but there is really not” (Interview, Ester, 24 August, 2012).

Despite being the only White woman in the organisation, Ester stated that she did not feel any racial discrimination and even went on to say that she worked well with everyone and there

‘were like a family’. While Lindi, Tshidi and Susan’s perceived that individuals normally tend to build strong relationships with those of a similar race, Ester was of the view that race was not an important determinant of who she built relationships with in the organisation.

The continued low representation of women in senior managerial positions discussed above is supported by research findings by BWASA (2011); Booyen and Nkomo, (2010), Marthur-helm, 2005, 2006 and the 2012 Business Report by Grant Thornton International. It was also clear that women managers’ perceptions of the implementation of corrective labour policies impacted on their perceptions of organisational justice. The study revealed that more should be done to fully incorporate women into senior management positions, especially Black women, in order to make them feel more comfortable and accepted in their management positions as this affects their perceptions of organisational justice and leadership confidence and self-efficacy, and in turn their performance. This finding also indicates that perceptions of organisational justice that were determined by how these women were represented and treated in the organisation were also related to their perceptions of their leadership positions, in particular their leadership self-efficacy.

4.4 Induction and training

To enable senior managers to be better equipped for their managerial role it is important that they are adequately inducted and trained. For example, Chuma and Ncube’s (2010), Mathur-Helm (2006), and Omar & Ogenyi (2004) note that that effective training of women managers improves their performance and promote their career advancement. When the women managers were asked about their perceptions of the induction and training they received, a number of the women managers indicated that they felt the induction and training they received was inadequate. As a result, it was evident that the women realised the need to be proactive in terms of findings their way round in the organisations and learning as much as possible about their leadership role. Pauline, who had joined the organisation three years ago described her first few days as a senior manager as follows:

"I never got a formal induction. I had to find my own way round.... I was like out in the field, out in the cold....But that was quite difficult. I had to find my feet around here....and with all the management meetings, I sort of picked up what is going on" (Interview, Pauline, 4 October, 2012).

Pauline's role involved dealing with external clients and making formal presentations to clients. It was therefore important that she understood quickly what the role entailed and had a good understanding of all the services that the organisation provided its clients. Unfortunately she felt that there was little guidance provided to her. As a result, it was important for her to be proactive and find her way around and learn how business was done. This may have been because Pauline was brought on as a professional so her superiors may have overlooked the fact that she would require formal induction and training. However, this created some uncertainty as to what was expected of her. Liff and Ward's (2001) research also found that the lack of adequate induction and training meant that managers were uncertain and not fully prepared for senior roles. Therefore, the research found that it was important that managers are properly trained and prepared for their role in order for them to succeed.

Although the women acknowledged that there was training provided by the organisation, the training provided did not seem sufficient for their current senior management positions, and it did not fully equip them to be successful in their positions. For training to be effective for managers, it must be specific and focused (Mathur-Helm, 2006). This means that ideally, training needs for those in senior management must be identified appropriately, must be relevant and administered properly. Ester described the training provided by her current organisations as follows:

"The training is generic. I have to attend a project management training...I have attending how many project management training now in past... I'm just gonna go because my name is on the list" (Interview, Ester, 24 August 2012).

For Ester, it seemed that training had become a routine and she was not very much interested in the training provided by the organisation because she felt that she was not learning anything new or specific to her role. This concurs with Mathur-Helm's (2006) finding that women managers stated that they needed more focussed training, instead of just the various short courses they received, in order for them to grow and succeed in their careers.

Tshidi on the other hand spoke passionately about the lack of adequate training in her organisation as she stated:

"They bring you in but they don't develop you" (Interview, Tshidi, 11 September 2012).

It was not surprising to hear Tshidi say this because earlier, she had also noted that little was being by her organisation to make the environment conducive for senior Black women. Some participants also attributed this lack of adequate training and induction to the lack of proper leadership they received from supervisors or their superiors. For example, Sally makes the following statement:

“So he (the supervisor) just wants results from me without properly inducting or training me properly” (Interview, Sally, 25 September 2012).

It was clear that according to Sally, although her supervisor did little to ensure that she was well trained for her role, he still expected her to perform well, and this clearly frustrated her. This showed that little is being done to empower women and unfortunately, women are not given space to make mistakes as they learn in their new roles, because it was all about producing results and meeting targets. This indicated organisational injustice because women did not feel that they were being treated fairly as they felt pressure to produce results without being properly inducted and trained.

Although there was a general perception that the training provided by the organisation was inadequate, this was not the case for all women. For example, Lindi seemed pleased with the training the organisation provided for its employees as she stated:

“Yes, well we have lots of training, and for us seniors, they just leave you to decide what you want (Interview, Lindi, 17 September 2012).

According to Lindi, the organisation had available any training needed at all levels of the organisation and this was seen as a positive thing. This was different from Ester’s experience, who felt that she did not have a choice but to attend training session scheduled for her, even though she did not feel that she needed to.

Susan also added that in addition to her organisation providing her with lots of training of which she was happy with, the company also supported her with her educational studies. She said the following:

“The (name of company) is currently funding my MBA so ya...there are bursaries and stuff like that available that you can apply for and the company will assist you” (Interview, Susan, 27 September 2012).

Susan seemed proud to be working for the company that was willing to train her and support her educational studies as this indicated that the organisation was willing to develop her as a senior manager.

It is important that women managers are properly inducted and trained as this will give them more insight and confidence about their role (Liff & Ward, 2001). Having adequate information and training about their senior management position increases women managers' perceptions of organisational justice and leadership self-efficacy and in turn, their performance.

4.5 Sources of support

Women managers rely on various sources of support for them to be able to cope with some of the challenges they face and perform well in their managerial roles. This support comes from colleagues, superiors, mentors or role models and organisational resources and policies (Chesterman et al., 2004; Hackett & Betz 1981; Schott, 2004; Sealy, 2010). The women in this study also acknowledged the various sources of support that enabled them to cope in their current position. The following looks at the different sources of support discussed by senior women managers in this study such as the support from colleagues, superiors, subordinates, colleagues and family. The presence of the different sources of support (and lack thereof) revealed the extent to which these sources of support related to their perceptions of organisational justice and perceptions of leadership self-efficacy.

4.5.1 Support from colleagues

According to Chesterman et al. (2004), colleagues can provide valuable support to women managers and can be a source of emotional support. Some of the women in this study acknowledged their appreciation for the support they received from colleagues (those working on the same level in the organisation), both women and men. For example, Pauline made the following statement about the supports she received from her colleagues:

*“Generally I have enjoyed the support I have received especially from colleagues”
(Interview, Pauline, 4 October 2012)*

Pauline revealed that she found her colleagues to be supportive and this had also made her job easier. Although Pauline had stated earlier that she was working in male dominated environment,

she appreciated the support she received both from her male and female colleagues. However, Tshidi made a clear distinction of the support she received from her male and female colleagues as illustrated in the statement below:

“So ja, with the female colleagues you tend to more open I suppose and it’s not always just work work work you know. But with the male colleagues, men will always keep to themselves and you just have a professional relationship, but it depends also, I think we tend to be like that...you associate better with people that understand you. So also with the males, you are careful not to overstep the boundaries, and sometimes they don’t talk as much as we do.” (Interview, Tshidi, 11 September 2012)

According to Tshidi, although she received support on work related issues from both the male and female colleagues, she found that she could also share with her female colleagues some of her personal issues and get advice on other issues, and not just work issues. As in Chesterman et al’s (2004), this study also found that the emotional support that women managers received put them at ease and enabled them to relax a bit at work and feel less isolated. Tshidi, was more inclined to share her personal issues with other women because she felt that they would understand her better because they were also women, and may have had similar experiences. She felt that men would not be able to understand her sometimes and as a result, kept a professional relationship with them. Tshidi’s view also shows that sometimes people hold on to the widely held gender stereotypes and believe that they share more similar experiences with people of a similar gender.

Although Tshidi found comfort in her relationship with her colleagues, especially the women, Sally had a different experience. Sally said the following to describe her relationship with her female colleagues:

“Some people said to me, females like to bring each other down, they can’t stand a good person, they just want to bring you down, each other down, and I just thought to myself, I don’t know, I mean...what on earth is it? I don’t know, I don’t know, I don’t know what it is, and that sort of is quite difficult for me to understand” (Interview, Sally, 25 September).

For Sally, it appeared that the few women in her organisation were not willing to assist and support each other and she struggled to come to terms with this. At the same time, because Sally initially struggled to earn the respect of her subordinates after her promotion, her perception

might be that her promotion was not welcomed by her colleagues, especially women. She might also have been struggling personally with the shift of becoming a manager and is not sure of what is expected from her. In addition, being the only female in the senior management team might have made her more sensitive to how others perceive her, especially other female colleagues and perhaps that explains why she felt that women did not support each other.

4.5.2 Support from the top management and superiors

Top management or superiors can provide senior women managers with the advice and guidance they may need to be successful in their leadership roles. In this study, there were mixed findings about the support that the women managers perceived to get from their supervisors and other superiors. For example, Lindi, stated that one of the things she liked about the organisation was the presence of a strong leadership team. She stated:

“... there is the good leadership team that we have, and you are also able to understand where the company is going, the vision.” (Lindi, 17 September 2012)

Lindi was pleased with the leadership, support and guidance she received from her supervisors and other superiors and as a result, her management experience had been very positive. In addition, the leadership and support she received from top management allowed her to understand and be part of the company's vision.

However, other women managers expressed their concern of the lack of proper leadership and support from their direct superiors in their current position, whom they initially looked up to for support and direction. Sally made the following statement to illustrate this:

“I don't want to be too critical of this place but I feel like the boss should be more involved you know. I shouldn't have to chase after him all the time, and at work, your boss should be the one providing you with the support you need” (Interview, Sally, 25 September).

Sally felt that her boss should have been more involved in her work and available to offer the guidance and support that she needed. However, her statement suggests that she was trying to be a bit cautious about critiquing her manager but still felt that the manager should have been more available to assist her. According to Sally, her boss should have been someone whom she could

look up to, to learn from and for support. However, she was not getting the support and guidance she had hoped for.

Ester also shares the same frustration about the lack of adequate leadership from her supervisor by stating:

*“I got...no leadership on this side (the supervisor) and I find out things for myself”
(Ester, 24 August 2012)*

According to Ester, she sometimes felt that her supervisor was not interested in her work and maybe that is why he showed no leadership. She went on to say that the lack of proper leadership created a lot of uncertainties as to what was expected from her. As a result, she sometimes went to the female CEO who was actually more helpful in giving her some direction and guidance. This CEO became Ester’s mentor and role model. Skinner (2012) and Schott’s (2004) research also showed the importance of having role models. Having role models, mentors or coaches enabled women managers to have someone to learn from, to get guidance and support, and also assisted women managers in developing their leadership self-efficacy (Schott, 2004; Skinner, 2012).

There were also some women who stated that they were not only unhappy about the leadership they received from their direct superiors, but also struggled to find mentors or role models whom they could learn from in their organisation. Mary illustrated this when she stated:

“So it’s mainly your network that gives you support and not your direct line manager. So if you were to say to me pick your role model in this organisation, I wouldn’t be able to, I’m sorry to say...” (Interview, Mary, 7 September 2012)

For Mary, not only was her direct manager not providing her with adequate support and leadership, but she went on to say that she struggled to find a role model in the organisation because she was not pleased with the leadership being portrayed by her superiors. Mary had hoped to have someone in the organisation that was not only successful but whose behaviour she could model in order for her to also be successful. However, she had not been able to find that person. It was clear that for Mary, a role model was not only just someone who was successful in their job, but also had to have certain personal characteristics and values.

This study therefore revealed that the lack of role models reported by the women was not only due to the underrepresentation of women, as suggested by previous research (Chesterman et al., 2004; Matsui, Ikeda, Ohnishi, 1989; McKinsey & Company, 2010), but was also due to other factors such as the lack of appropriate leadership and certain characteristics to model from.

For most of the women in this study, the lack of proper leadership from their direct superiors meant that they had to look for support and guidance elsewhere in the organisation. Some were fortunate to find role models and mentors, however, most were not. Having supportive role models and mentors is important because it encourages women to increase their leadership confidence and self-efficacy and to deal with some of the challenges they face in their leadership role (Hackett & Betz, 1981; McKinsey & Company, 2010; Sealy, 2010, Schott, 2004). In addition, support from top management entails top management sharing information, sharing resources and treating others fairly. Therefore, the lack of adequate support from top management indicates distributive, procedural, interactional injustice.

4.5.3 Support from subordinates

Having subordinates who are motivated, hardworking, respectful and supportive made it easier to manage and lead the subordinates. This was the general view shared by the senior women managers in this study. For example, Natasha, a Sales Manager with about 6 years of senior management experience stated:

“With the staff’s encouragement and motivation it helps a lot” (Interview, Natasha, 11 October 2012).

For Natasha, the support she received from her staff kept her going and she felt that she could count on them and this also increased her leadership self-efficacy. It was also important that her staff be motivated to succeed because their performance was a reflection of her performance as a senior manager. This concurs with Wang’s (2007) study which revealed that group performance contributed to leadership self-efficacy.

Wang’s (2007) study on whether or not followers or subordinates contributed to a manager’s leadership efficacy revealed that followers’ positive feedback increased their managers’

leadership self-efficacy. This was also evident in this study as the women managers expressed that the feedback they received from their team members and subordinates was not only a source of encouragement but also increased their confidence in their leadership abilities. For example, Tshidi described the feedback she received from her subordinates as follows:

“Sometimes people tell me that they get a lot of help from me and when they are stuck they can count on me and I deliver results so I think they see that” (Interview, Tshidi, 11 September 2012).

Knowing that people noticed and valued her work and relied on her made Tshidi feel appreciated and confident that she was performing well as a manager, and this increased her leadership self-efficacy. Tshidi was not only confident in her ability to perform well and deliver results, but was also pleased to know that others also considered her to be a good leader.

Susan also received similar feedback from her subordinates as she stated:

“So I think my team, and they have said it in some of the surveys, they love their boss, they don’t have any problems with me and I’m a nice boss” (Interview, Susan, 27 September).

Like Tshidi, Susan also felt that the positive feedback she received from her performance evaluation by her subordinates confirmed she was a competent manager, and this reinforced her leadership confidence. For Susan, this support and positive feedback from her subordinates was essential because as noted earlier, she often felt undermined and isolated among some of her colleagues and the senior management team. As a result, her subordinates had become her main source of support.

4.5.4 Organisational support

Research has shown that it is important for management to understand some of the challenges that women managers face and be willing to assist and develop women managers (Booyesen 2007, 2010; Chuma & Ncube, 2010; Crampton & Mishra, 1999; Konrad, Kramer & Erkut, 2008; Liff & Ward & Ward, 2001; Mathur-Helm, 2006; Omar & Ogenyi, 2004). Some of the women managers in this study described the various support structures present in their organisations. Lindi for example, discussed the flexi program that the organisation had introduced a few years ago:

“We have flexi-working practices. I can decide to come in at 9 o’clock and leave later so I own my day. No one will say to me, ‘this is what you need to do’. So there is that balance that the organisation is trying to instil, knowing that we have families so I can drop my child everyday at school, and still be at the office when I need to” (Interview, Lindi, 17 September 2012).

Lindi was pleased with the flexi-work practiced employed by the organisation because it helped her find a balance between work and her family responsibility of taking her child to school. For Lindi, the flexi-work practices also indicated that the organisation was being supportive towards those with family responsibilities. However, although Lindi commended the company’s flexi-work practices, she later mentioned that she still had to work 24/7 even on weekends to keep up with her demanding role. This finding concurs with Chesterman et al.’s (2004) finding that despite the presence of flexi-work practices, women still felt that they had to work full-time and sometimes put in more work hours in order for them to progress.

Tshidi also made reference to the employment assistance programs that the organisation was offering:

“The company also has employee assistance program that help you with various issues and even personal issues” (Interview, Tshidi, 11 September 2012)

From what Tshidi said, it appeared that she acknowledged and appreciated the effort being made by her organisation to assist and support their employees. However, the rest of the women in this study did not mention other or similar organisational practices or structures that were in place to assist them with finding a balance between work and family or organisational and personal issues for example.

4.5.5 Support from family

As noted above, most of women reported that they lacked adequate support from their superiors, colleagues and the organisation as a whole. Fortunately for some, their families, especially their husbands, were a major source of support and encouragement because they helped them cope with stress and other pressures from work caused by working with difficult colleagues or superiors and working long hours. Natasha described the support from her husband as follows:

“My husband supports me a lot and pushes and encourages me to be the best I can be. He reminds me that I should not let anyone get me down” (Interview, Natasha, 11 October 2012)

For Natasha, her husband was her main source of support and she went to explain that sometimes she needed someone to talk to, especially after a stressful day at work and she could trust her husband. Her husband was able to provide her with the emotional support she needed and give her motivation and strength to face the challenges at work.

Sally also acknowledged the support she got from her family, especially her husband when she said:

“My family understands, especially my husband... I think my husband is used to the hours now” (Interview, Sally, 25 September 2012)

Most women managers are wives and/or mothers and sometimes their roles require them to work long hours and this might cause stress or pressure as they try to balance their work and family life (Bussey & Bandura, 1999; Chesterman, et al., 2004; Chuma & Ncube, 2010; Crampton & Mishra, 1999; Houle, Chiocchio, Favreau & Villeneuve, 2009; Judge & Colquitt, 2004; Liff & Ward & 2001; Mathur-Helm, 2006; Ngoako, 1999). Therefore, fact that Sally’s husband did not complain about her working long hours and was supportive made Sally appreciate her husband more. This made it easier for Sally to be at peace with the demanding role of being a senior manager.

The above has discussed the various support (and lack thereof) that women managers in this study discussed, and the extent to which they were related to their perceptions of organisational justice and leadership self-efficacy. It was clear that the support (or lack thereof) that these women received informed their perceptions of organisational justice and leadership self-efficacy. This again indicates the association between perceptions of organisational justice and leadership self-efficacy. As previous research findings, more needs to be done to fully support and develop women managers. With the right support, women are able to utilise their individual capabilities and talents, and increase their confidence to become successful managers (Hackett & Betz 1981; Omar & Ogenyi, 2004; Sloma-Williams et al., 2009).

4.6 Managing subordinates

Negative stereotypes about women being incompetent managers continue to be present, (Booyesen & Nkomo, 2010; Chuma & Ncube, 2010; Hoyt & Blascovich, 2005, 2007; Schein, 2007) and unfortunately these impact on women managers' experience of managing employees. In addition to discussing the positive support they received from their subordinates, some of the women managers in this study also discussed their experiences of managing employees, both male and females. Tshidi for instance, made the following comment about her work relationship with male subordinates and with managing them:

"We have a professional relationship...one of respect with the men that report to me"
(Interview, Tshidi, 11 September 2012)

Previous research found that male subordinates often struggled to show respect and accept leadership from women managers because of their stereotypes about women being ineffective managers, for example in Chuma and Ncube's (2010) study. However, in this study, Tshidi, like the rest of the women, felt that she had a professional relationship her male subordinates, which was build of respect and as a result, she did not feel undermined by their male subordinates.

However, with regard to managing female subordinates, some of the women managers found it challenging as they did not feel that these women respected them as much as the men did. For example, Ester illustrated this by saying:

"I think men are easier to lead than women. They focus on work and not on personal matters. When dealing with employees who are mostly women, issues of distrust creep in" (Interview, Ester, 24 August 2012)

For Ester, women were difficult to manage because she felt that they did not respect her and were sometimes too sensitive, because they took everything personally and also brought personal issues into their work. As a result, she sometimes felt that the women did not trust her leadership capabilities and questioned her decisions. When probed further about her relationship with her female subordinates, she added:

"My relationship with females, it's ok. With the younger females, I had conflict in the past. It's maybe because I am too driven or I'm too perfect. So I picked up a little bit of conflict with the younger females. And then the older females its fine, but the younger, 20

years around there, it seems like they just can't handle me. I'm friendly with them, but it's sort of a red light. I'm very weary" (Interview, Ester, 24 August 2012).

Ester had described herself as a very confident, hardworking and driven individual and as reflected in her statement above, she felt that this threatened the other women, especially the younger women. This could have been because most of these younger women held on to the traditional stereotypes of women taking on more communal and nurturing roles than leadership roles and therefore found it difficult to accept another woman as a leader or manager. In addition, Ester, being the only White woman in the organisation, might have been perceived differently and that could have explained the source of the conflict, because as discussed earlier, people tend to mix well and get on well with those of a similar race and background.

Negative stereotypes about senior women managers are still evident and sometimes challenge women managers' perceptions of their leadership self-efficacy. When women managers are respected in their role as managers, they perceive justice and fairness in the organisation and this increases their confidence in their role as managers. Furthermore, if women managers are confident in their role as managers (have leadership self-efficacy), they are likely to find ways of managing their subordinates effectively despite the challenges they might face.

4.7 Participation in decision making

The involvement of employees in the decision making process indicates that employees input is valued and this also contributes to their perceptions of organisational justice (Chory & Westerman, 2009; Colquitt et al, 2001). The study revealed mixed findings with regards to women managers' participation in important decision making in the organisation. Some participants felt that they were involved throughout the process and were able to freely contribute their views. Tshidi described her view of the decision making process as follows:

"I would like to think that I play a role in it (decision making) so I am satisfied with my role in it. In our strategy meetings we discuss our plans for the future and which client we should focus on and what are the best way to get to where we want to be and I am expected to give input, which I do, so I am involved" (Interview, Tshidi, 11 September 2012).

As reflected in the statement above, Tshidi was pleased with role she played during the decision making process and she also felt that her input was expected and valued. However, a large

number of the senior women managers in this study felt that their views and ideas were not considered or taken seriously during the decision making process. Susan shared the following to describe her experience with decision making processes in the organisation:

“Sometimes when we meet, at group level, for strategic planning with different management staff in the bank it can be quite, quite challenging, and people say subtle statements that make you feel like you do not know how the business is run. And so I decide to shut up, but then that defeats the purpose of having me into this company at this level coz then why did you bring me in if you don’t want my views” (Interview, Susan, 27 September 2012).

Susan’s statement clearly demonstrated her frustration with the way decisions were being made in the organisation and how she felt undermined. It seemed that in this environment, she felt restricted and was not able to freely express her views and as a result, she decided to withdraw from actively taking part in the decision making process. Further, Susan’s reaction is line with Baldwin (2006) and Jepsen and Rodwell (2010) finding that when individuals perceive injustice in the organisation, they may reduce their work effort.

The feelings expressed by Susan and other women revealed that the women lacked what Thibaut & Walker (1975) and Leventhal et al. (1980) referred to as voice, which is the ability of employees to voice their opinions and views in the decision making process (Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2001). Therefore, this perceived lack of participation in the decision making reflected a lack of procedural justice.

Natasha also expressed similar views about the decision making process in the organisation as reflected in this statement:

“My participation is....to a lesser degree now than when I first joined. Now, not really I don’t think. I have added responsibilities though, and with the restructuring and changes in management, different people I report to, I don’t feel that I have the same control in what I do or making decisions as now most of the decisions are made by the people at the top” (Interview, Natasha, 11 October 2012)

According to Natasha, although her senior management position had more responsibilities, she felt that she had little control and autonomy when it came to deciding how to get the job done. This may have had a negative effect on her leadership self-efficacy, because as shown by Ng, Ang & Chan’s (2008) study, having more autonomy, increased manager’s leadership self-

efficacy. So because most of the senior women managers including Natasha perceived limited autonomy in their current positions, this challenged their leadership self-efficacy.

Having the ability and opportunity to participate effectively during decision making processes was perceived as a sign of organisational justice, and also increased women managers' perceptions of organisational justice and leadership self-efficacy. However, those who felt that they had little control and autonomy in their work saw this as a sign of organisational injustice and this led them to question their leadership self-efficacy.

4.8 Perception of the performance evaluation and management

When employees perceive the performance evaluation process and outcome to be fair, they perceive distributive and procedural fairness (Chory-Assad, 2005; Colquitt et al., 2001; Jepsen, & Rodwell, 2010). Most women discussed their experiences and perceptions of how performance was evaluated, and the extent to which they viewed the process as objective and fair. As part of their performance evaluation process, the managers ought to receive feedback and recognition for their performance. Therefore, the presence, or lack thereof, of feedback and recognition are discussed as sub-themes in this section.

According to the women managers in this study, performance was evaluated differently in each organisation. In some organisations, the 360 performance evaluation process was employed, and in others, the evaluation of performance only considered self-ratings and ratings from their superiors. Of all the women in this study, only Lindi, was content with the current performance management evaluation system the company used. She described the performance evaluation process as follows:

“We have come up with a proper system that works. It's on our HR online system. So you would nominate someone who must rate you, and you select if it's a client or cross functional or a subordinate, colleague or you know, it's like a 360 degree...Discussions take place with managers and you get feedback and discuss a developmental plan. So ya it's a proper proper process that happens throughout the bank” (Interview, Lindi, 17 September 2012).

Lindi commended the organisation's performance evaluation system. She perceived the performance evaluation process to be a fair process, which also incorporated a developmental plan for each employee. This meant that she perceived the evaluation process to be procedural

and distributive fair. However, it was also interesting to note that Lindi was one of the senior managers working in the organisation's human resources department and therefore took part in the design of the organisation's performance management and evaluation system. As a result, her view about the process may have been biased.

However, other women managers were apprehensive about the way performance was evaluated. Ester is one of the women who openly expressed her feelings about the performance evaluation process:

“The performance system in the organisation is based not on real performance, and it's like a paper exercise, which is the biggest joke out here, I perceive it as the next joke, I don't value it at all” (Interview, Ester, 24 August 2012).

Ester stated that she did not value the company's performance evaluation process because she felt that the process was not done properly and did not reflect her true performance or effort. As a result, for Ester, the outcome of the performance evaluation process was insignificant. This meant that Ester perceived the performance evaluation process to lack procedural and distributive fairness.

Although Mary was also not content with the company's performance evaluation process, she also explained that she found the process to be subjective. Mary described the performance evaluation process as follows:

“So I don't think it's very participative. You only have your say once, in a chain of events of 5 or 6 in the process” (Interview, Mary, 7 September 2012)

According to Mary, the outcome of the performance evaluation process was determined by one's superiors and she had little say in the process and therefore questioned the outcome of the performance evaluation process. For most the women, because the outcome of the performance evaluation process often appeared unfavourable, there were more concerned about how the process was conducted. This supports Chory-Assad's (2005) view that when the outcome of a process or decision was negative, employees tended to place greater emphasis on whether or not the process was procedurally fair. In this study, the performance evaluation processes applied in these different organisations overall reflected both procedural and distributive injustice.

4.8.1 Feedback

Feedback on one's performance is essential because it provides one with information on areas they need to focus and improve on and also indicates areas that they are performing well in, and this information is valuable for developmental purposes. This was the general view shared by women managers on the importance of feedback from their superiors. Research has also shown that feedback on one's performance is important because it contributes to one's leadership self efficacy (Bussey & Bandura, 1999; McCormick et al., 2002; Paglis & Green, 2002). In this study, there were concerns about the lack of proper or specific feedback on performance. Mary stated the following to illustrate her feelings about the lack of feedback from her superior:

“So it doesn't help from a developmental point of view and from understanding what it is that you need to do and how to fix what needs to be fixed. (Interview, Mary, 7 September 2012).

For Mary, the lack of proper feedback meant that she struggled to fully understand what was expected from her or how to ensure that she managed to perform well as expected. This meant that Mary was often uncertain about her role and was also concerned about her ability to develop and grow.

Susan also felt that she was not receiving adequate feedback and described her attempt to improve the feedback process from her superior as follows:

“In my case, it (feedback sessions) also happens twice a year...I think I'm still of the view that I would rather and I would still want to have-and I try as much as possible but sometimes I don't get the sense that people want that-where I try once a month to have a one on one with my managers, so that we can just talk about issues and hopefully it's also an opportunity for them to say you well in this but you didn't do this or handle this well, you could have handled it better., and I don't get that sense that they want to have these meetings” (Interview, Susan, 27 September 2012).

Susan clearly valued the importance of feedback from her supervisor because she believed that the feedback, whether negative or positive, would help her grow and develop more as a senior manager in her role. It was clear that for Susan, despite having many years of managerial experience, she valued feedback because she was now working in a different field (from sales to human resources). Unfortunately, her attempts to encourage continuous feedback from her

superiors had been fruitless and this clearly bothered her. As with the other women, Susan valued feedback on her performance.

4.8.2 Recognition

When employees feel that they are not given appropriate recognition or reward for their performance, they view this as an indication of distributive injustice, and this was also evident in Esterhuizen and Martins' (2008) study on perceptions of organisational justice or fairness on employment equity practices. In this study, most of the women felt that their hard work was not well recognised and appreciated and this was a reflection of distributive injustice. Ester described how she felt about not been adequately recognised for her hard work as follows:

“Sometimes I tell my friends that if I can just get one thank you, just one acknowledgement, or just one ‘Ester (pseudonym) you are on the right track’,’ thank you for your hard work,’ and yet I do a lot of work, I take a lot of work home, I do a lot of stuff you know, sometimes you have to motivate people and say thank you, just a thank you” (Interview, Ester, 24 August 2012)

According to Ester, the lack of recognition for her hard work disappointed her and for her, being recognised and appreciated for her hard work would be a good motivator. Sally also made the following statement to illustrate her feelings about the lack of recognition from her supervisor.

“Sometimes I get the feeling that he (her supervisor) is focusing on my weaknesses and things I am not doing right. The things I am doing right are not highlighted and that sometimes puts you on the spot” (Interview, Sally, 25 September 2012)

Sally's statement illustrates the feelings shared by other women managers, of not being fairly recognised and rewarded for their performance accomplishments. It is also important for management to highlight their employees' performance accomplishments because performance accomplishment and positive feedback has been found to be one of main sources of leadership self-efficacy (Bussey & Bandura, 1999; McCormick et al., 2002; Paglis & Green, 2002). This is because when managers or leaders perform well in a specific leadership task and are informed, they are likely to feel more confidence about leadership abilities and be more willing to take on leadership task (McCormick et al., 2002).

Lindi, however had a different experience. She felt that her hard work and good performance was well recognised in the organisation by stating:

“Within 12 months, I was nominated a top achiever with an incentive of a trip, an overseas trip. And I mean that’s also good. I mean 7 days free, fully paid, you don’t even spend a cent” (Interview, Lindi, 17 September 2012).

Lindi was not only proud of her accomplishments, but was also pleased that the organisation had recognised her hard work and performance by awarding her with a trip overseas. This was exciting for Lindi because it meant that her hard work was appreciated and this motivated her to work even harder. As research has shown, being recognised and receiving positive feedback encourages managers to feel more confident about their role (Bussey & Bandura, 1999; McCormick et al., 2002; Paglis & Green, 2002).

From the above, it is clear that most of the women were not pleased with the performance evaluation process and the feedback they received on their performance. Further, most women felt that their hard work and performance was not well recognised. These women’s views indicate that most women did not perceive the performance evaluation process and outcome to be procedural and distributive fair. In addition, by providing employees with adequate and positive feedback and highlighting their performance accomplishments, management would be able to motivate and help senior managers develop their leadership self –efficacy.

4.9 Demanding roles and pressure to prove oneself

Management roles are often regarded as demanding because they require high levels of commitment, greater responsibilities, managing more staff and long hours of work (Liff & Ward, 2001). The senior women managers in this study generally felt that their senior management roles were very demanding and in addition they felt that they were constantly under pressure to prove themselves to others. Further, the women managers also had to find a balance between the management role they had between home and work.

When asked to describe what her main responsibilities and duties were, Pauline said the following:

“I also have meetings to attend now and again and have my own personal targets so I’m juggling a lot of things at the moment” (Interview, Pauline, 4 October 2012).

Pauline’s statement indicated that there was a lot expected from her as a senior manager and she had many responsibilities to fulfil. Although Liff and Ward (2001) found that being a senior

manager meant that one had to be able to manage their time better and control the times of meetings and this was indicated in this study. Sally, for example, stated the following:

“Weekends we have to work, so there is that element of too many long meetings during the day, and this culture of meetings...it does not always work you know, so we are always in a rush and even at night you dream of work” (Interview, Sally, 25 September 2012).

Sally felt that she did not have much control of some of the meetings she had to attend and this affected her work negatively, meaning that she had to find ways to put in more hours of work by working overtime and on weekends in order to get all the necessary work done. This finding concurs with Chesterman et al.'s (2004) finding that despite the presence of flexi-work practices women still felt that they had to work full-time in put in more work hours in order for them to progress. However, this sometimes left women feeling stressed and burnout, as illustrated by Lindi:

“We work 24/7 literally, on weekends as well, and if this carries on, they will lose their good performers. Because we are just so exhausted, and it’s like push push push” (Interview, Lindi, 17 September)

Although Lindi enjoyed her job, she however felt that her role was too demanding and this was clearly starting to also have a negative effect on her health. In addition to putting in extra hours of work, most of the women still felt that they were constantly under pressure to prove themselves. Mary said the following to describe the pressure she felt in her current role:

“It’s just targets and you have to exceed all your targets, exceptionally to be recognised” (Interview, Mary, 7 September 2012)

According to Mary, it was not enough to just get the job done, but the job had to be done exceptionally well. Further, some of the women felt under pressure to prove themselves because they were women and for some, because of their race. Ester said the following about her feelings of being a woman manager:

“I always feel like I’m on the red carpet” (Interview, Ester, 24 August 2012)

Ester was aware of the stereotypes against women managers and as a result, she sometimes felt as if she was being watched to see if she was performing well as a manager and if she was deserving of the senior management role. Ester’s experience concurs with Konrad, Kramer and

Erkut's (2008) findings that women managers sometimes feel that they are on the spotlight in management positions and feel the pressure to work hard and prove themselves.

Susan, a Black senior manager said the following to explain that she not only had to prove her capabilities as a woman but also because of her race:

"You have to constantly prove yourself because other people think 'oh maybe she got this position because of her race'" (Interview, Susan, 25 September 2012).

Susan's statement indicated that she was also aware that sometimes, the appointment of Blacks and women was merely viewed as token appointments and led to the employment of unqualified and undeserving candidates (Lipka, 2008; Mathur-Helm, 2005; Sealy, 2010). Therefore, she felt that she had to work harder to prove that she was worthy of this senior management position.

Sally, Susan and Mary's sentiments concurred with research findings by Chuma and Ncube (2010); Omar and Ogenyi (2004) and Sealy (2010) which showed that most women managers felt that they were constantly in the spotlight and therefore felt pressure to prove themselves.

4.9.1 Multiple roles

In addition to working demanding roles as senior managers, most of these women were either wives or mothers or both and this means that sometimes they had to perform these roles simultaneously, sometimes resulting in conflict between their work and family lives (Chuma & Ncube, 2010; Crampton & Mishra, 1999; Judge & Colquitt, 2004; Liff, 2001; Omar & Ogenyi, 2004).

Pauline, a single mother described the challenge of balancing her work and family life as follows:

"There is just so much to do and juggling work and family is also challenging, so I don't ever have enough time." (Interview, Pauline, 4 October 2012).

For Pauline, being a single mother and not having anyone to assist her with looking after the children at times added more pressure to her already demanding job. Tshidi, also a mother of two discussed the pressure of balancing work and family life as she stated:

*“I also find that being a mother and a wife adds more to my plate, as when the children are sick, it interferes with my work, which is also looked down upon sometimes”
(Interview, Tshidi, 11 September)*

It seemed that Tshidi was not only feeling the pressure of a working mother, but was also concerned about the impact it would have on her career progression. Her concern is warranted because research has shown that failure to effectively find a work-life balance was one of the reasons women failed to progress in their careers and decided to change their careers (Mathur-Helm, 2006; Sealy, 2010; Renton, 2009).

However for women who had grown up children like Mary, it was easier for them to go on work trips and to work long hours, as Mary pointed out:

“Fortunately I’m at the age where it (travelling) has less of consequences. I haven’t got young children and I have gone through all that. I mean I’ve had lots of conflict, working long hours until midnight. Right now it’s just my husband and I so the only thing I have to manage is my relationship with my husband and he doesn’t like that I travel so much and I don’t like it either. It’s not been a show stopper as yet and it’s not been an issue yet but I wouldn’t like it to continue (Interview, Mary, 7 September 2012)

Senior management roles are demanding and this is why it is important that senior women managers receive support as much as possible from their colleagues, superiors and the organisation as a whole. It was also clear that stereotypes threats were still evident in the workplace and this put pressure on the women to work hard and prove to themselves and to others that they were competent managers, just as men. Further, despite the work pressure, most women managers also found balancing work and family challenging.

4.10 Potential for progression and growth in the organisation

When the participants were asked about their views for career advancement, especially in their current organisations, White women generally shared the same view that they did not perceive potential for growth in their current organisation. This was mainly because they believed that their opportunities to advance in their careers were limited because organisations were giving preference to Blacks, especially Black women when it came to promotion, especially into

executive or top management positions. Ester provided the following statement to express her views about the future of her career:

“I can’t go further where I am. I’ve reached the ceiling. I can’t go any further. I don’t see myself in a top management position. I don’t have the profile for that. And I’m going to be very honest with you, in the type of industry we are in, they are serious about transformation, they are serious about getting more black people. There is no way they are going to look at me, as a white female, so I don’t see myself, with my profile, in that kind of position” (Interview, Ester, 24 August 2012)

When making the above statement, Ester’s tone lowered and she appeared to be very much concerned about the future of her career. She added that her concerns were reasonable, given the fact that her current organisation, like many other organisations, was focused on implementing transformation policies, in line with South Africa corrective labour legislation, such as Affirmative Action, Black Economic Empowerment and Employment Equity policies. However, Ester’s perception might be flawed because research continues to show that White women continue to occupy more senior positions than Black women (Booyen & Nkomo, 2010; BWASA, 2011).

Mary also shared similar concerns as she stated:

“I am still at the same level. So it’s not like I have progressed into the organisation, and I think I am unlikely to progress into the organisation. I’m sitting in a space where white women, I think personally, probably have the least opportunities, and I also don’t think that I have the right profile to progress and you know, I’m the wrong race ” (Interview, Mary, 7 September 2012).

According to Mary, there was no potential for growth in the organisation because she was a woman and she was White. This again is interesting because research indicates the opposite. Mary also made reference to the new leadership body to emphasise why she felt that there was no potential for growth in her current organisation:

“You will see the latest new leadership body that has just been appointed, there are only two whites and they are both white males, they would rather have a white male than a white woman” (Interview, Mary, 7 September 2012).

As with the rest of the White women, Mary’s perception of the lack of career growth was evident. This widely held perception could be because of a number of reasons. It could be

because they are attributing their race as the reason for lack of career progression or it could be a reflection of their fears and uncertainties about the impact of Affirmative Action or Black Economic Empowerment policies on their careers.

White senior managers felt uncertain about their career progression and some believed that they had reached the glass ceiling. On the other hand, it seemed that Black women saw potential for career growth but not because of their race. They believed that career growth was possible because for example, for one of them, there was a clear career path for her in the organisation and for another she was pursuing her studies (an MBA) in the hope of moving to another senior position once she had completed her studies. The presence of career growth or progression motivated these managers to work hard and take on more senior management positions and this increased their leadership self-efficacy.

4.11 Perceptions of justice and fairness

Some of the senior women managers' experiences discussed above showed how their experiences were related to different types of organisational justice. In addition, some participants made specific reference to organisational processes and outcomes and the treatment they received in the organisation and this also revealed the extent to which they perceived justice and fairness in the organisation.

Lindi for example, said the following to illustrate her interaction with colleagues and the sharing of information in the organisation:

“I collaborate a lot even with colleagues at my level, to see and look for best practices and we share a lot of information” (Interview, Lindi , 17 September 2012).

Lindi was satisfied with her relationship and interaction with her colleagues and was also pleased with the way her colleagues were willing to share information with each other. This indicated that Lindi perceived the presence of interactional justice (interpersonal and informational justice respectively) in organisation. However, other women managers in this study revealed that there was limited communication and interaction in the organisation. Ester, for example, pointed out the following:

“There is almost like zero communication and interaction on how work or things should be, so that I feel is a big problem...With regards to overall communication, I don't see

any. There is very much email. But you know, email is cold, it's not interaction
(Interview, Ester, 24 August 2012)

For Ester and a few others, the lack of effective communication and interaction not only reflected interactional injustice in the organisation, but was also frustrating and created a lot of ambiguity. Sally described this point clearly as follows:

"So information and communication is extremely challenging in this organisation and that creates a lot of frustration on my side ... and I am sometimes feeling left out in the cold" (Interview, Sally, 25 September 2012)

In addition, some of the senior women managers felt that they had little say in how things were done and that some of the processes and procedures were not participative. For example, Mary, as stated earlier, did not think that the performance evaluation process was participative. Natasha indicated that she was not content with the way meetings were arranged and conducted and how the commission and profit sharing structure was implemented. However they both found it difficult to raise these concerns. This indicates the lack of voice because at times, in order to avoid conflict, the women felt that it was easier to just keep quiet and let things go.

Ester provided an illustration of how she dealt with the challenge of lack of voice in the organisation, for example, in reference to the performance evaluation process. She stated the following:

"I gave myself a middle mark, although I feel here and there it should be higher. I just thought of going middle because I don't want to go into conflict, if my supervisor wants to push the mark up he can, which he doesn't, so I disregard all those systems, and I just carry on for myself, because I know my output and I carry on to make sure that I have that output." (Ester, 24 August 2012).

Baldwin (2006) and Jepsen and Rodwell (2010) found that when employees perceived injustice in the organisation, they decided to leave the organisation, reduce their work effort or file a grievance. However, in Ester's case, as with the other women, there was no indication of women reducing their efforts or filing grievances because they perceived injustice in the organisation. Instead, the women carried on with their work and did not allow anything to bring them down. This was a reflection of strong leadership self-efficacy as the women were persistent and resilience despite the challenges they faced.

Looking at the experiences discussed by these women, their perceptions of work processes and outcomes and views of the treatment they received in the organisation, it was clear that they were very much concerned about their interpersonal relationships in the organisation and how certain processes and decisions were implemented. It therefore seemed that generally women managers placed more attention on procedural and interactional justice, that is, on the fairness of work processes, involvement in these processes and interpersonal relationships than actually on the outcome of the decisions, such as pay, benefits and outcome of the performance evaluation process. This is also in line with Simpson & Kaminski (2007) and Sweeney and McFarlin's (1997) findings that women were more concerned with interactional justice (being treated fairly with respect and dignity) and with procedural justice (fairness in the decision making process and procedures implemented in the organisation) than the outcome of the decisions.

4.12 Perceptions of leadership self- efficacy

Previous research on women's perceptions of leadership confidence or leadership self-efficacy found that women generally reported low levels of leadership confidence and self-efficacy (Chesterman et al., 2004; Hackett & Betz, 1981; Kloot, 2004; Mathur-Helm, 2005; McCormick et al. 2002; Michie & Nelson, 2006; Morrison, 1992; Tsui, 1998; White, De Santis & Crino, 1981). However, women in this study seemed confident in their own abilities as senior managers and were comfortable with taking on leadership roles and their ability to perform well in their leadership positions as reflected in the statements below. It is also important to note that leadership confidence, or leadership self-efficacy was viewed differently by the women because of their experiences.

Ester said the following to illustrate her confidence in her ability as a leader:

"I think as I have said, I am very self-driven, umm... I'm a very hard worker, I'm loyal, I take accountability and responsibility in everything that I am doing. I achieve things, I start a thing and I achieve a thing, if I have a problem, I will try and find a solution and I try to do as much as possible before I can go to someone with a problem" (Interview, Ester, 24 August 2012)

Ester was confident in her leadership abilities, motivated and driven to succeed in their role. She also described herself as a woman with strong characteristics and qualities believed to be essential for a leadership role such as managing, leading and controlling (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

This therefore supports the literature that there are actually few differences in the leadership effectiveness and performance of women and men (Jamali & Nejati, 2009; Kloot, 2004; Schein, 2001; Omar & Ogenyi, 2004).

Susan said the following to describe how she felt about her leadership role:

“So I think throughout my life I have always taken on a leadership role wherever I am, whether I’m in a church or I’m with a group of friends, so I’m the organizer, I’m perpetually a leader in whatever group that I find myself in” (Interview, Susan, 27 September 2012)

Susan’s account reflected that she had high levels of leadership self-efficacy and it also seemed that her perception of leadership self-efficacy was strengthened by previous positive leadership experience. This finding is in line with McCormick et al. (2002) and Hoyt and Blascovich (2007) research findings which also revealed that previous leadership experience and accomplishments promoted one’s leadership self-efficacy.

Mary also stated that she was confident in her abilities as a leader and was willing to work hard to succeed despite the challenges she faced in her role.

“When I decide to take the challenge, I take the challenge, I don’t give up easily, I’ll just keep soldiering on until I have proved everybody wrong” (Interview, Mary, 7 September 2012).

Mary’s conviction showed that she had high levels of leadership self-efficacy because she was resilient and motivated to succeed despite the challenges she faced. However, the women also made reference to work experiences such as the lack of communication, recognition, respect and leadership from their superiors that challenged and limited their leadership abilities and also made it difficult for them to reach their full potential. Susan’s illustrates some of her challenges as follows:

“...and it hasn’t been an easy space. I feel like I’m stifled but I just decided that I can’t be bothered with confrontation now so I’ll let this one go. In fact I have had a lot of moments like this and I don’t think that’s an environment, a conducive environment to thrive” (Interview, Susan, 27 September 2012)

Mary shared similar experiences to Susan as she stated:

“So I feel like I’ve sort of been put into a box which I don’t feel I belong in so I’m having issues with that” (Interview, Mary, 7 September 2012).

Mary’s statement indicated frustration as a result of not being able to fully express herself and not having the opportunity to prove her full potential as a leader. Bussey and Bandura, (1999) also note that those with a high sense of efficacy are sometimes frustrated and stressed by limited opportunities to make full use of their full potential. Pauline also stated the following to show that she felt her leadership abilities were being restricted:

“I think he (her supervisor) is very aware and it’s very clear that I have gone and reserved myself in meetings, and that’s not me...I actually don’t believe that I’m operating optimally” (Interview Pauline, 4 October, 2012)

Clearly, these challenges threatened these women managers’ development and maintenance of their leadership self-efficacy. However, it was also interesting to note that despite the challenges these women faced in the workplace, some of them acknowledged how important it was for them to be proactive and find ways of dealing with the challenges that threatened their leadership self-efficacy and performance. It was clear that the women also acknowledged that a leadership role was challenging in so many ways and that it was important to approach the right people that would be able to assist them in the role and find other ways to develop themselves. Natasha for example made the following statement:

“As a leader you need to be open, open for challenges, change and open to listen to advice” (Interview, Natasha, 11 October 2012)

According to Natasha, every senior manager needed to accept that management roles were challenging and needed to be willing to adapt to the demands of being a manager and also make full use of the advice and support available to them. Tshidi also said the following to stress the importance of having the right support:

“But the networks that you build as a person will then assist you. If you are quiet, you will sit there and burn on your own” (Interview, Tshidi, 11 September 2012)

For Tshidi, because the management role was challenging, it was important to be proactive and source the right support. Most women also stressed the need to work hard and to be proactive in terms of developing one’s leadership abilities and confidence further. This showed that, as noted

by Ruderman et al.'s (2002), women in managerial positions are naturally highly competent and committed to success and therefore, are capable of working hard and succeeding in their roles despite the challenges they faced.

4.13 Linking organisational justice and leadership self efficacy

As noted above, for the most part, the women in this study did not perceive justice and fairness in most of the processes, interactions and outcomes of decisions in their organisations. These perceptions of injustice and fairness in their organisations could also be linked their perceptions of leadership self-efficacy. The injustice and lack of fairness in organisations' processes, interactions and outcomes as reflected by the lack of proper and positive feedback, lack of role models, lack of autonomy in decision making, for example, challenged their leadership role and leadership self-efficacy. These women often felt discriminated, isolated and powerless and this in turn affected their leadership confidence and leadership self-efficacy.

Hoyt and Blascovich (2007) and McCormick et al. (2002) found that those with high levels of leadership self efficacy were persistent, goal-oriented and resilient and this enabled them to remain focused and perform well in their roles despite the challenges they faced. This study also showed that the women had strong leadership self-efficacy and remained positive and resilient despite the injustice they experienced in the organisation. Baldwin (2006) and Jepsen & Rodwell, (2010) note that when employees perceive injustice in the organisation, they may decide to leave the organisation, reduce their work effort or file a grievance. In this study, having strong leadership self-efficacy prevented most women from reducing their work effort or from giving up their roles and leaving the organisation despite perceiving various forms of organisational injustice.

4.14 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the themes that emerged in this study and the extent to which these findings confirmed previous studies. The study found that women continue to be underrepresented in senior management positions and that like previous research findings, Black women continue to be the most marginalised group (Booyesen & Nkomo, 2010; Mathur-Helm, 2006). The study also found that race influenced one's experience as a women manager. For example, Black women stated that struggled to fit in and sometimes felt sidelined and

undermined in comparison to their White counterparts. On the other hand, White women managers perceived a lack of career progression because of the colour of their skin in comparison to Black women.

The study also found that these senior women managers needed more specific and focused induction and training, and more role models and support from colleagues, superiors and the organisation as a whole in order to assist them with the challenges they faced in their roles. This study also revealed that the lack of proper leadership from top management made it difficult for women managers to receive proper guidance and support and to find adequate role models and mentors.

The lack of respect, trust and healthy work relationship with colleagues and superiors indicated a lack of interactional justice. In addition, the lack of participation in the decision making process and in the performance evaluation process made women managers question the outcome of these processes and reflected both a lack of procedural and distributive justice.

Despite their demanding roles and the challenges that they faced in the workplace, most of the women in this study were confident and driven and reported strong leadership self-efficacy. Further, feedback, especially positive feedback from subordinates was found to be the main source of leadership self-efficacy in this study, and this finding correlated with Wang (2007) study. Unfortunately, the women expressed distress in terms of the lack of proper feedback, recognition for their performance accomplishments from their superiors and lack of role models, which have been found to be the main sources of self efficacy (Bussey & Bandura, 1999; McCormick et al., 2002; Paglis & Green, 2002).

It was therefore clear that women managers' experiences were related to their perceptions of organisational justice and leadership self efficacy. Further a link between organisational justice perceptions and leadership self-efficacy was made in the following ways. Perceptions of organisational justice contributed to the development and maintenance of women managers' perceptions of their leadership self-efficacy. In addition, high levels of leadership self-efficacy provided women managers with the strength to deal with the injustice they faced in the organisation.

Chapter 5 Conclusion

This study examined South African senior women managers' experiences and how their experiences related to their perceptions of organisational justice and perceptions of leadership self-efficacy. The aim of the study was to provide a deeper understanding of these women's experiences and how they are limiting or contributing to their perceptions of organisational justice and leadership self-efficacy. In addition, the research sought to investigate the interplay between perceptions of organisational justice and perceptions of leadership self-efficacy. This study was relevant because it not only sought to contribute to research on women managers' experience but also attempted to provide a deeper understanding of the impact of these experiences on women's perceptions of justice and leadership self-efficacy, which have been seen to both contribute to performance.

The research questions aimed to examine the experiences women senior managers experienced had in the workplace, how they related to their perceptions of organisational justice and leadership self-efficacy and to investigate the perceived link between women managers' perceptions of organisational justice and leadership self-efficacy. The following provides an indication of the extent to which these research questions were answered.

The study found that women continue to be underrepresented in senior management positions and as with previous research findings, Black women continue to be the most marginalised (Booyesen & Nkomo, 2010; Mathur-Helm, 2006). Attempts to promote and advance women in management positions have not been very successful.

The senior women managers interviewed for this study made reference to both positive and negative work experiences. As expected, positive work experiences related to perceptions of organisational justice and negative work experiences were an indication of organisational injustice. However, there was a general perception that most organisational processes and outcomes were not transparent and fair and this reflected a general view of organisational injustice.

The study also revealed that although senior women managers shared similar experiences as women managers, there were also some differences in their experiences depending on the type of organisation they worked for, their race marital status and number of children. For example,

some of the organisations were able to provide various support structures such as flexi-time work practices, child care services and employment assistance programs. In addition, because South Africa is racially and culturally segmented (Mathur-Helm, 2005), women's experiences also differed depending on their race.

Overall, the women that took part in this study reported high levels of leadership self-efficacy and were confident in their ability to perform as managers and to manage and lead their employees. Their work experiences were also found to be related to and contributed to their perceptions of leadership self-efficacy. Past research revealed that leadership self-efficacy may be improved through performance accomplishment and through providing feedback, reducing conflict and role ambiguity, encouraging participation and involvement and openness in decision making (Lipka, 2008; Paglis, 2002; Santovec, 2010). For some, positive work experiences such as having role models or mentors, receiving recognition and positive feedback on their performance contributed to their leadership confidence and in turn their leadership self-efficacy. However, most women found themselves lacking role models, adequate support structures, recognition for their performance and working in stressful environments, all of which challenged their leadership self efficacy. Nevertheless, having strong leadership self-efficacy enabled the managers to remain positive and perform well despite the challenges they faced. This was in line with previous findings that those who reported high levels of leadership self efficacy remained resilient, motivated and performed well despite the challenges they faced in the workplace (Bussey & Bandura, 1999; Hackett & Betz, 1981; Houle, Chiocchio, Favreau, & Villeneuve, 2009; Hoyt, 2007; Lipka, 2008; Santovec, 2010).

The study also expanded on Wang's (2007) study on the impact of follower feedback and group performance on leadership self-efficacy. Wang's (2007) study only focused on the effect of subordinates informal and verbal feedback on their managers' leadership self efficacy, this study revealed that both informal and formal feedback from subordinates promoted managers' leadership self-efficacy.

This study also found a link between perceptions of organisational justice and leadership self-efficacy. Perceptions of organisational justice contributed to the development and maintenance of women managers' perceptions of their leadership self-efficacy. When women managers

perceived organisational justice, they were more confident in their leadership abilities and when they perceived injustice, their leadership self-efficacy was challenged, making some of the women doubt their ability to perform well as managers. In addition, high levels of leadership self-efficacy provided women managers with the strength to deal with the injustice they faced in the organisation. This was because despite perceiving injustice in some of the work processes and outcomes, the women were able to remain positive, assertive and confident in their leadership abilities. By proving the link between organisational justice and leadership self-efficacy, the study therefore contributed to research on contextual and additional factors that contribute to leadership self-efficacy such as those done by Paglis (2002); Schott (2004) and Skinner (2012)

5.1 Recommendations and future research

From the above study, it is clear that organisations are slowly placing women into senior and managerial positions. However, organisations should be more sensitive to women managers' experiences and try to make the work environment more conducive for senior women managers by encouraging fair work practices and properly managing diversity in the workplace. This means that management need to be truly committed to transformation and change and effectively manage diversity in the workplace to ensure organisational justice. Further, and perhaps most importantly, organisations should not treat women as a homogeneous group because women have different experiences depending on their background, race, marital status number and age of their children.

Organisations must do more to support women in their positions by providing them with proper induction, training, feedback and recognition. It is understandable that sometimes the support an organisation provides its employees depends on the size of the organisation and that availability of resources. Nevertheless, top management must make more of an effort to ensure justice and fairness in the workplace. Organisations should ensure that their women managers are treated fairly, with respect and are encouraged and supported to reach their full potential as managers and leaders.

Although the research questions were answered to a large extent, further research can be conducted in order to increase understanding of perceptions of organisational justice and leadership self-efficacy among senior women managers and understanding of how these two constructs are linked. Further research can also aid in increasing the application of these findings. A quantitative study can be conducted to further investigate the relationship between perceptions of organisational justice and leadership self efficacy on a larger sample of senior women managers. In addition, because race was shown to influence women managers' experiences, future research could investigate issues of race more in post-apartheid South Africa to compare senior women managers' experiences and their perceptions of organisational justice and leadership self-efficacy among different racial groups.

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Appendices

Appendix A - Interview guide

- Can you tell me a little about your work and the place where you work?
- How is your normal day at the office usually structured?
- Can you talk me through how you progressed to this position?
- How did you feel about the selection process that was used?
- What was the first thing you had to do after your promotion?
- How do you compare the support you are getting in your current position to the previous position?
- How do you feel about your managerial role?
- Can you explain to me how similar or different you perceived the role would be to how you found it?
- What are your strengths in this role?
- What are your weaknesses in this role?
- What have been some of the positive experiences about the role?
- What have been some of the negative things about the role?
- Please explain to me the challenges that you feel you face as a woman manager in the organisation?
- How do you overcome these challenges?
- What organisational support structures are in place to support you with some of the challenges you face?
- Since your first experience as a manager in the organisation, what has changed?
- How do you feel about your performance as a manager in this organisation?
- How do you think others perceive your performance as a manager?

- Can you explain to me how your performance as a manager is evaluated?
- How do you feel about the performance evaluation process?
- What has been your experience with managing your team or group of employees?
- Can you describe to me your relationship with your colleagues?
- How do you perceive your relationship with your superiors?
- Given your experience, how would you describe your leadership experience with men in the organisation?
- What is your perception of the reward systems that are in place in the organisation?
- How do you feel about your participation in the decision making processes?
- To what extent do you feel that this is related to you being a woman manager in the organisation?
- Do you feel that there is potential for growth for you in the organisation?
- Where do you see yourself in the next 5 years?
- Is there anything in particular you feel the organisation can do more to support you?
- Is there anything else you would like to tell me that you feel would be useful to include?

Appendix B - Participant information letter



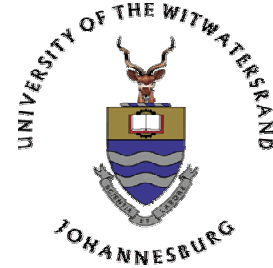
Psychology

School of Human & Community Development

University of the Witwatersrand

Private Bag 3, WITS, 2050

Tel: (011) 717 4500 Fax: (011) 717 4559



Invitation to participate in the research

My name is Ruth Mupambirei and I am a student completing a Masters in Organisational Psychology at the University of Witwatersrand. As part of my degree, I am required to complete a research report. I would like to invite you to participate in this research on South African women managers' experiences and their perceptions of organisational justice and leadership self-efficacy.

Participation in this research is completely voluntary and you may choose to participate or not with no consequences whatsoever. Your responses will be confidential. The research will be conducted at your workplace, and if this does not suit you, we can discuss where to meet to conduct the interview. Participation in this research will involve completing a short demographic questionnaire, followed by a one-on-one interview. The interview should last approximately one hour. A tape recorder will be used to record the interview. If you are willing to participate in this research, please complete and sign the attached participant's consent form and consent form for the use of a tape recorder during the interview. Please email your completed forms to me at rmupambirei@gmail.com to ensure confidentiality.

This research aims to broaden knowledge on South African women managers' experiences and to identify ways of developing and supporting effective women managers. No individual results will be given; however, a summary the overall results of the research will be available in 2013 and can be obtained with an email request. Should you have any questions, or require more information, please do not hesitate to contact either myself, or my supervisor Dr Grace Khunou. Your assistance in this research will be greatly appreciated.

Yours Sincerely,

Ruth Mupambirei
Organisational Psychology Masters Student
rmupambirei@gmail.com

Dr Grace Khunou
Senior Lecturer
Grace.Khunou@wits.ac.za

Appendix C - Consent to participate in the research study

Dear Potential Participant,

You are invited to take part in a research focusing on South African women managers' experiences and their perceptions of organisational justice and leadership self-efficacy.

Please sign below to show that you have provided your consent to participate in this research on the following conditions:

- Participating in this interview is voluntary, and there are no negative consequences for choosing to take part or not.
- You may refuse to answer questions you would prefer not to.
- You may choose to withdraw from the study at any point up to the completion of the interview.
- There are no foreseeable risks or benefits for taking part in this research.
- No information that may identify you will be included in the research report, and your responses will remain confidential.

Signature.....

Date.....

Appendix D – Consent for tape recording the interview

Dear Potential Participant,

I would like your permission to use a tape recorder during our interview for my research project. Using a tape recorder will enable me to capture all your responses and this will add more value to the data collected. Note-taking cannot ensure the same degree of the accuracy as recording the actual words spoken. This data will later be transcribed and analysed. Please note that anonymity will be assured by labelling tapes using fictional names.

Please sign below to show that you have provided your consent for me to use the tape recorder during the interview on the following conditions:

- The tapes will stored safely and will only be heard by the researcher and the research supervisor
- All tape recordings will be destroyed after they have been transcribed.
- Transcripts will be anonymised.
- Direct quotes can be used however no identifying information will be used in the transcripts or the research report

Signature.....

Date.....

Appendix E – Demographic Questionnaire

Age_____

Race_____

Home language_____

Marital status_____

Job Title _____

Number of people supervised_____

Number of years in this position _____

Number of years with the current organisation_____

Managerial experience_____

Appendix F – Ethical clearance certificate

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (SCHOOL OF HUMAN & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT)

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

PROTOCOL NUMBER: MORG/12/008 IH

PROJECT TITLE:

South African Women Managers' experiences and perceptions of Organisational Justice and Leadership Self-Efficacy

INVESTIGATORS

Mupambirei Ruth

DEPARTMENT

Psychology

DATE CONSIDERED

10/07/12

DECISION OF COMMITTEE*

Approved

This ethical clearance is valid for 2 years and may be renewed upon application

DATE: 19 July 2012

CHAIRPERSON 
(Professor K. Cockcroft)

cc Supervisor:

Dr G. Khonou
Psychology

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR (S)

To be completed in duplicate and **one copy** returned to the Secretary, Room 100015, 10th floor, Senate House, University.

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

This ethical clearance will expire on 31 December 2014

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES