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Entering a man's world: women bus drivers in South Africa

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University of the Witwatersrand

Global Labour University

Entering a Man's World: women bus drivers in South Africa

Research report submitted to the faculty of humanities in partial fulfillment of M.A. in Labour and Globalisation

By

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Abstract

The study explores the experiences of women who enter traditionally male occupations. Bus driving has long been thought of as a masculine job in South Africa. Accordingly the entrance of women into this occupation is a new phenomenon within the country where it has been received with mixed feelings in the labour market and by society at large. This study focuses on these women's experiences, challenges and the coping strategies they use in order to adapt to a work environment that is predominantly male. Participants in the study were ten women long distance bus drivers with work experience ranging from two to ten years. The study employed an in-depth interview method where all the interviews with participants were carried out face to face at one of the largest bus companies in South Africa. There were two separate interview schedules; one for the women drivers and one for two gender coordinators from Trade Unions. Observations were also conducted during trips with five women and two male bus drivers to examine their experiences with passengers, colleagues, service people and management. The study suggests that the continuing acceptance of women in traditional male occupations within the industry is structured by patriarchal social attitudes which encourage the resistance of this sexual division of labour. Unless these attitudes are addressed to promote gender inequality, occupational segregation by sex will continue to thrive.

Declaration

I declare that this research is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of Master of Arts in Labour Policy and Globalisation at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university.

Signed----------day of ----------20

Vivian Chuchu

DEDICATION

To Danmore Chuchu who believes in my ability, keeps my hope alive and who has always encouraged me to take that leap of faith. I am blessed to have you as a brother.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Firstly, would like to thank God for all the mercies he has brought into my life. Secondly, I also would like to thank my supervisor, Professor Roger Southall for his patience, constructive criticism and providing guidance throughout the stressful journey.

I would like to acknowledge and thank the GLU programme for awarding me this great opportunity

A big thank you goes to my mother Catherine Chuchu and her sisters who have never given up on me, *Anadziva, Sambiri minamato yenyu yakasvika*. To my daughter Rudo, I would really like to thank you for encouraging me to achieve my dreams even if it means not being there when you need me most. My brother Henry Chuchu, thank you for the prayers. To my nieces, Panashe and Tadiswa Chuchu I'm grateful for all the visits that would always leave a smile on my face after a long stressful week.

To my fellow country man, Crispen and Nunurayi, thank you for the encouragement and support throughout the programme, God bless you.

Most importantly, to all women bus drivers at Autopax Bus Company who treated me like a sister during the research, thank you very much. Your courage and dedication makes me proud to be a woman surviving in a man's world.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANC	**African National Congress**
BWA	**Businesswomen's Association**
CEDAW	**Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women**
COSATU	**Congress of South African Trade Unions**
ILO	**International Labour Organisation**
ITF	**International Transport workers' Federation**
NEHAWU	**National Education and Health Workers Union**
SACCAWU	**South African Commercial, Catering and Allied workers' Union**
SATAWU	**South African Transport and Allied Workers' Union**
UN	**United Nations**

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Since the beginning of the 20th century there has been an increase in women joining the paid labour market in response to social forces like poverty, legislation and the changing nature of the workplace. Ginwala (1995) argues that women have joined the labour force to seek paid work to be able to survive. In support of Ginwala's statement one can say that the nature of capitalist expansion required a larger workforce, and women responded to that demand, availing themselves of the opportunity to increase household income. However, the nature of women's participation in waged labour is shaped by many factors, including marital status, reproductive rights and the widely prevailing expectations that women have primary responsibility for family care.

Walby (1988) argues that although a dramatic increase in the number of women participating in the labor force has taken place in the past decade, women have played a secondary role in that work force since the ancient civilization of man. The value of women was, and still is, viewed as less than that of a man. Traditionally a women's role in society was that of raising children and handling the duties of the household but now most women want and desire careers and their own place in this world. They want to stand on their own two feet, become self-sustaining individuals and become independent and free of other's limits. In today's world, it has become clear that women in all careers are striving to gain equality in the work force.

There are many issues that still surround women in the workplace and for a long time women have been at a disadvantage when it comes to competing with men. Women have not been given the same educational opportunities as men and women have been stereotyped into certain jobs. For years this discrimination has been fed by gender bias and proven by the fact that women entering the workforce have been paid less than a man for doing the same job.

The emergence of women in the workplace has not been without its own difficulties. Through determination, women in cabinet, unions and other leadership positions in the world have been the driving force in the enactment of laws to protect not only themselves but others in the workplace; for example the adoption of Beijing Platform of Action 1995 and The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly. These international conventions are designed not just for protection from gender discrimination but also protection from discrimination based on marital status, pregnancy, race, disabilities, sexual preference and age. This gives women the ability to break out of the gender roles that were created for them by society long ago.

Twentieth century economic and political developments due to globalization have presented South African women with both new obstacles and new opportunities to wield influence. For example, labor force requirements in cities and mining areas have often drawn men away from their homes for months at a time, and, as a result, women have borne many traditionally male responsibilities in the village and home. Women have had

to guarantee the day-to-day survival of their families and to carry out financial and legal transactions that otherwise would have been reserved for men.

Women nonetheless continued to join the urban work force, and by the late 1980s, women made up at least 90 percent of the domestic work force and 36 percent of the industrial work force (SATAWU 2010). Women's wages were regularly lower than men's even for the same job, however. In addition, positions normally held by women had long hours and few benefits, such as sick leave; women often were dismissed without advance notice and without any type of termination pay.

In South Africa women constituted only about 36 percent of the labor force in the formal economy in the mid-1990s but this has improved to over 49 percent in 2004 (labour report 2005). Women of all races generally held lower paid jobs than men, and they were paid less in comparable jobs. During the apartheid era, white women most often worked in service industries and clerical positions; a few white women held supervisory jobs or government offices. Black women dominated the large domestic work force; some worked in clerical positions or in temporary jobs, often in agriculture. Women managed most agricultural production in the former homelands and rural areas where men frequently left home to work in cities or in the mines.

Cowen (2011:76) asserts that “a look at the history of women in the workplace shows great progress. But experts say they have miles to go before overcoming the many problems women in the workplace face.” The South African workplace has changed dramatically, especially for women due to enabling legislation. Their roles had traditionally been limited to activities such as teaching, nursing and administrative work;

today's women are taking on roles in unexpected places, such as the boardroom, parliament and in previously male dominated occupations. Once thought to be too sensitive, or tenderhearted to succeed in these occupations, women have proven that they have what it takes to not only succeed, but excel in roles long thought to be best suited to men. This thesis investigates the challenges faced by these women who have entered into traditional male dominated occupations whose culture, equipment and environment is pro-men with specific reference to long distance bus driving.

The Employment Equity Act (1998) promotes equal opportunity and fair treatment in employment through the elimination of unfair discrimination and also Implements affirmative action measures to redress the disadvantages in employment experienced by designated groups, to ensure their equitable representation in all occupational categories and levels in the workforce. This Post-Apartheid measure provides for equal rights for all, and seeks to ensure that no South African is discriminated against on the basis of sex and gender.

However, the thesis assumes that there is lack of acceptance of women as drivers, particularly long-distance drivers, within the industry. Given that women are recognised as generally being treated differently in the workplace there's a wide gap between the gender laws in print and how women are treated in practice. This situation is reflected in women still being subjected to sexual harassment and unfair treatment by employers, passengers and supposed colleagues. In a macho occupation like bus driving, the organisation of work and the balance between work and family still result in discrimination against women.

“Millions of women work in the transport industry worldwide, from bus and train drivers, to port workers, airline cabin crew, calls center staff and office workers. Like most workers in the industry, women are seeing globalization; deregulation and privatization squeeze their jobs, their wages and their conditions. At the same time, women have been facing unequal wages and rights, closed doors, poor parenting and maternity provisions, discrimination and harassment.”(International Transport workers’ Federation 2011:01).

Women’s involvement in the transport sector as long distance bus drivers is a relatively new phenomenon in South Africa. This thesis investigates the challenges they face and also looks at the strategies employed by these women to cope in a traditional male dominated occupation. It also examines the strategies being taken by the transport unions to encourage and enhance the integration of women in the previously ‘Macho’ occupations like bus driving. The research also investigates that it is because of their gender that long distance women bus drivers face different challenges to their male co-workers and that they receive different treatment by employers, passengers and the society at large. Gender differences in the workplace have prompted different coping strategies among genders. Therefore this research aims to identify how long distance women bus drivers respond to the masculine culture of bus driving in the transport sector.

The excuse of a lack of availability of females with code 18 drivers’ licenses and insufficient experience in driving large vehicles is still blocking employment opportunities of women as bus drivers in the industry. The allocation of shifts and the allocation of

overtime with a gender bias are still common. Women are mostly employed as local drivers for the business express which operates during the day from 5am to 5pm as it is assumed that they need to go back home to look after their families; while males are given long distance trips where there is overtime to be claimed. Women are as able bodied and have the same financial needs as men hence there should be gender neutrality in the allocation of shifts.

In the South African society in general, patriarchal relations in the home, the workplace and the community may continue to hamper women's access to previously male dominated occupations. According to Cock (1991:30) "both African and Afrikaner traditions have contributed to shaping the current understandings of gender differences in South Africa. Women are viewed as nurturing, caring, emotional and receptive". These perceptions may compromise their acceptance in the male dominated occupations like bus driving.

Blum (1991:131) has blamed some women for being "willing victims if unwitting victims of societal norms, as they are socialised to accept a marginal role in the workplace." Cockburn (1983) also blames gender differences and hierarchy at work, home and at institutions like marriage, religion and media for making women accept subordinate roles in the society. These institutions and socialization can also be reasons of why women are still facing challenges in traditional male occupations like the transport sector. In order to encourage many women to take up jobs which are traditionally considered to be spheres for men only and express their talents it is important to

investigate what factors prevent them from participating in the first place and what skills are required for one to join this ‘Macho’ occupation.

Driving heavy vehicles like buses is portrayed as masculine and very risky, suitable only for men not women. Hence, the introduction of female drivers has been received with speculation, curiosity and as a challenge to negative stereotyping of women as drivers in general. The working conditions and perceptions of women who get into macho jobs are also challenges that come with bus driving.

The research investigates the challenges faced by these long distance women bus drivers in the transport sector, whose culture is predominantly masculine, to investigate the level of women’s participation in these jobs in South Africa and the current measures that are being taken by employers and unions to enhance female emancipation. This thesis also seeks to examine whether there is gender inequality or differential treatment in the transport sector and which copying strategies different genders have adopted in order to cope in this industry. Cheng (1996) states why masculinities are rarely studied. He argues that, males do not notice their dominance in an occupation like bus driving; hence when there is absence of women altogether, male homosociality occurs.

The increasing number of women bus drivers in the country indicates that masculinity is not a requirement in order to drive a bus. However, women who have joined previously ‘macho’ occupations like bus driving are still faced with challenges of unequal pay for work of equal value, limited advancement opportunities, denial of paid maternity leave, and lack of access to child care facilities and freedom from sexual harassment

(Finnemore and Van der Merwe 1996). Furthermore, negative stereotyping that women are 'bad drivers' is still continues to linger in some societies. These stereotypes according to Berger (1986:62) "… are instigated as a means to keep women in their place, and that is the home".

Driving has long been thought of as a masculine job and women bus drivers still have to bear the brunt of sexist jokes, harassment, discrimination and unequal wages. In spite of these negative attitudes, there has been an increase of long distance women professional bus drivers on the roads worldwide. Veolia transport, the third largest bus company in Sydney, Australia, employs 20 women out of 400 male drivers (Boronia 2008). Metro Bus in Johannesburg had no female drivers until 1995 and by 2007 it had employed just 56 female drivers out of the total number of 500 drivers (City of Johannesburg 2010). Autopax Passenger Services Limited has employed 34 female drivers in their City to City and Translux buses on local and international routes.

It is however, evident that women are ready, willing and able to enter male dominated jobs but are prevented from doing so by resistance of both employers and male workers, this being reflection of South African patriarchal culture (Blum 1991:131). This is echoed by Benya (2009:35) "It is not difficult to recruit women into traditional male occupations; rather it is a challenge to traditions and norms." Those who have made it into the male dominated occupations like long distance bus driving are facing numerous challenges which include discrimination by employers and fellow workmates. Seager (2005:95) argues that "in the transport sector women are densely populated in the lowest paying jobs like selling tickets, manning the reception and information desks."

The oppressive institutions and some structural obstacles, combined with a discomfort with 'gender-inappropriate' positions owing to gender socialization tend to discourage many women from attempting to enter male dominated fields despite the available supporting legislation. This research may then help bus companies and unions in addressing the challenges faced by long distance women bus drivers and provide them with better coping strategies and thus encourage more women to join the profession in order to meet employment equity targets.

1.2 Research Questions

The study aimed to explore the experiences of women who have entered into the previously male dominated occupations in the bus sector through the following research questions:

- What has motivated women to join long distance bus driving, a traditionally male dominated occupation?
- What are the challenges faced by these long distance women bus drivers?
- How do these long distance women bus drivers cope with these challenges?
- Which mechanisms do they use to survive in this male dominated industry?

According to Stats SA's 2007 mid-year estimates, South Africa's population is approximately 47,9 million, of whom approximately 24,3 million (51%) are female but only 43% are employed (BWA report 2008) this, women's partial participation in the workforce especially in traditional male occupations can be alluded to many reasons

which will be investigated in this study. This thesis also suggests that women bus drivers face different challenges to their male co-workers and that they receive different treatment from their employers, clients and the society at large. Gender differences in the workplace have prompted different coping strategies among genders.

Given the background above, the researcher thought it necessary to find out what challenges female long distance bus drivers face as they enter into the previously male dominated occupations and how they are coping.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Recent studies in South Africa have concentrated on women entry into previously male occupations like mining (Benya 2009), occupational segregation by sex and race in Post-Apartheid South Africa (Parashar 2007), and gender employment practices and conditions of work among small and medium scale enterprises in Gauteng Province of South Africa (Chioma 2006). To my knowledge there has been no or little examination of literature on women in the transport sector from an academic perspective, although there is more popular literature from bus companies and unions. It is against this background that the researcher responded to this gap neglected by the existing literature in this new phenomenon in the South African work culture.

2.2 Gender segregation at work

It is still a man's world since most leadership positions in both private and public spheres are taken by men. Carlas and Smircich (1993:222) emphasise that managerial and organizational literature has been written by men for men and about men. Despite the fact that women have been occupying organizational positions from the beginning of industrialization, Powell (1999) argues that many theories of effective management have been based on observations of male managers. Brewis and Linstead (2000) contend that in such classical management and organizational theories such as Taylorism and human relations, the perspectives of gender have been suppressed.

It can therefore be argued that men have been dominating the organizational structure and have managed it in such a way that it discriminates against women. Women are seen as a threat to man's masculinity. Game and Pringle (1983:88) comment that "if women move into male areas of work, men feel their masculinity is being attacked…so they prefer to keep women at a safe distance (as far away as home!)." Hence men adopt ways of how they can keep woman out of the work place because they feel their territory has been invaded. They do this by making sexist remarks, sexual harassment and alienation of women from trade unions.

However, Cooper and Davidson (1984) argue that the past century has seen enormous changes in the nature of the work place. Furthermore, women are penetrating blue collar jobs which have been dominated by mostly man. The advance of machinery and labour saving technology, along with the expansion of light engineering, has greatly extended the range of industrial jobs women can tackle (Jephcott 1962). However, changes in the labour process are being thought of being able to make changes in the sexual divisions of labour. Women are traditionally expected to do light, less dangerous, clean, boring and immobile jobs while men do heavy, dirty, dangerous, exciting and mobile work (Game and Pringle 1983).In the transport sector, as an example women, are customarily expected to sit behind a desk, and provide information to customers while the men are expected to be in the workshops and on the road as drivers.

Game and Pingle (1983:88) further assert that "equal opportunity does not mean women go into companies on equal terms, women who want to 'make it' have to play company politics; they should be tough at the same time meeting the conventions of

feminine attractiveness". By this Game and Pringle illustrate how women should conduct themselves differently from men despite the fact that they are in the same environment. This implies that the workplace is treated as a male territory and women who are there are only temporary. If a woman becomes a bus driver she might, as Walby (1991:74) argues, "...be treated as a danger and joke to male masculinity." Therefore she must be done away with by means that will make the women resign on her own accord. Man may use language that is inappropriate and sexually harass the women and make their working life uncomfortable.

Cheng (1996) argues that organisations, be they work or social ones, use both masculinities and femininities to establish themselves. Gender therefore comes to be seen as a system of power that excludes and disadvantages women and privileges men. The organisations talked about by Chang see femininity as inferior, thereby making women subordinate to men. Humphrey (1987) perceives these gender roles adapted in the work place as having a huge impact on the division of labour. These gender differences which are internalized during socialisation are carried into the workplace in such a way that male dominance is preserved while female inferiority is reinforced (Benya 2009).

In these organisations, where gender is a result of social construction, femininity is seen as inferior. Positions or jobs are given in accordance to the defined gender roles. Women are to be managed by men. They are viewed as temporary and uncommitted their major role is conceived as being child bearers and care givers. Webster et al (1999) show how risk taking is an important part of occupational culture; hence in the

transport sector the women bus drivers have developed coping strategies. Webster et al (1999:21) further define occupational culture as “belief and practices that workers develop as appropriate ways to life to meet the demands of their particular occupations.” Therefore women bus drivers have also developed practices and cultures that help them in working in a male dominated industry where society might judge their career choices.

In The origins of family, Private Property and the State, Engels argues that women’s subordination is a form of oppression which results from and is maintained because it serves the interest of capital (Stichter and Parpart 1988:2). Male dominance according to Engels is linked with capitalism and would end with “the advent of a socialist revolution and the wholesale entry of women into the waged labour” (Stichter and Parpart 1988:2). Despite what we think about the likelihood of female subordination being eliminated under socialism works of Engels and Marx are of relevant significance in understanding the continued subordination in the labour market and they may contribute to what would end subordination. It is therefore against this background that it becomes easy to see why women are still facing hostility as they get into, male dominated occupations like bus driving.

The early Marxists focused on women’s exclusions from the productive sector and confined them to the reproductive sphere. Humphrey (1987) argues that women were included in the work force as unskilled labour at the bottom of the hierarchy. This exclusion and subordination of women, as Stichter and Parpart (1988) argue, is not peculiar to pre-capitalist society but also capitalist societies. They assert that the

capitalist system emphasizes private property and the commodification of waged labour, leading to sexual division of labour. Humphrey (1987:3) asserts that “the position of men and women in the economy is explained by preference to house hold decisions.” The man is the bread winner while the woman is the home and child minder.

On the other hand, feminist movements have made women across the globe challenge their ascribed gender roles, hence their increasing participation in previously male dominated occupations like long distance bus driving. In South Africa, there has been commitment to gender balance in the workplace by legislation like the National Gender Policy Framework of 2003 that would serve to ensure equal rights and opportunities for South African women in all spheres of government, private and public sector jobs, community and family. However, this is not always matched by the actions on the ground; long distance bus driving demands a lot of time away from family and home. Hence, women operate within a constricted paradigm that requires them to choose between career opportunities and their household responsibilities as mothers or caregivers. However, due to economic constrains and enabling legislation more and more women have been seen choosing long distance bus driving as a career.

Literature shows that women still experience structural disadvantages as workers despite legislative support. This study is therefore informed by the fact that women in traditional male dominated workplaces continue to face challenges in the male preferring industries like the transport sector. With democratization in 1994, new policies put in place impact on sexual division of labour and these have challenged traditional stereotypes; as a result more women have been entering the workplace, including

previously male dominated industries and positions, breaking bonds imposed by society as they defy stereotypical expectations and show resilience in the face of societal structures.

Game and Pringle (1983:83) argue the fact that “equal opportunities do not mean women enter the job market on fair terms.” Once they are inside, they still have employers who are usually influenced by preconceived gender ideas when it comes to hiring and promotions. Women and men have different relationship in terms of employment and advancement. Women have to constantly fight to be in the same position and to be treated the same as men. They have to fight the hostile job environment in order to be trained and promoted. Thus, according to Humphrey (1987:7) “women are hardly promoted regardless of their stay in their employment.” This may allude to the stereotyping and discrimination of women in training so as to be promoted. This study is therefore concerned with how long distance women bus drivers fight against the gender stereotypes, inequalities and discrimination in the workplaces and to identify the coping strategies they use to adapt to environment in their workplaces.

Women in the labour market are not only faced by income differences as a form of discrimination. They face sexual harassment, bullying, humiliation, patronizing superiority and physical threats. In support to this, in the article “at the barrel of a gun” Hartman (2010) argues that women’s entry into previously male occupations is seen as part of the ‘gender agenda’ but “this ‘gender agenda’ is taking some strain because there have been reports of sexual harassment, gender violence, and even murder”.

According to Hartman (2010), women who enter traditional male occupations like the army, mining or the transport sector, are at greater risk of harassment compared to women who occupy the traditional female jobs. When the numbers of males overrides that of females, hostility and intimidation is common. In support of this, Gruber (1998) argues that gender numerical predominance is a significant physical and sexual threat. In these instances women are seen to have threatened the masculinity of the workplace hence action must be taken.

Organizational structure may also be a challenge for women. Powell (1988:39) argues that "structural aspects of organisations promote power inequalities between gender and they set the stage for discrimination and particularly sexual harassment." Some organizational policies and procedures impact on how discrimination and sexual harassment are dealt with. Gruber (1998) contends that sexual harassment for women is influenced by organizational tolerance to harassment, perceived commitments of organizational officials to deal with harassment problems and policies implemented to address or combat such problems.

2.3 Gender segregation at work in South Africa

Walby (1988:17) defines segregation as "the concentration of persons by inscriptive criteria such as gender and race in particular sectors of employment". This has been the situation faced by most African women in South Africa as they enter the labour market. The conception of such an ideal emerged from people whose history is steeped in institutional racism where rights, life chances and the distribution of goods and services were predicated along racial lines. More importantly, respect for the dignity of

individuals was historically determined by the colour of their skin and, further within the various racial groupings, by their gender designation. The socio-cultural dictates of all groups defined women to be inferior to men and as such assigned to them the position of minors in both the public and private spheres of life. In the private sphere, women were less likely to lead in decision-making. In most Interpersonal relationships, men had more power. This historical legacy of patriarchy Influenced essential informal and formal human relationships with a marked impact at the workplace (National Policy Framework for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality 2008).

Parashar (2007) argues that In South Africa, institutionalized apartheid exacerbated inequities in labor force outcomes, not just between the various races (Africans, Whites, Coloureds, and Asian-Indians), but also between the sexes. The proportion of African women within the labour force increased from 23 percent in 1960 to 33 percent in 2001 (Stats SA 2001).From 2001 to 2010 it was estimated that African women due to the economic meltdown of 2008 to 2009 they have been hardly hit by layoffs due to their lack of skill and are now densely employed in the informal sector (Elson 2007). However, the larger numbers of these women are employed in domestic work and low paying jobs in most sectors of the labour market.

Buhlungu (2010) notes that South African women are mostly concentrated in low skilled jobs due to their educational background. South Africa has twelve years of formal schooling: seven years of primary school (encompassing grades 1-7) and five years of secondary school (grade 8 to 12). To attain a secondary school diploma, students must pass a matriculation exam at the end of secondary school. Historically, very small

percentages of blacks attained secondary school diplomas and even fewer attained post-secondary degrees. This situation has led to a low representation of women into skilled jobs like bus driving where a Metric certificate is a pre-requisite. Benya (2009) argues that women (black) “are still seen as a source of cheap labour, as a result they are paid lower salaries than their male and white core-workers”. Thus women still suffer discriminatory pay scales.

Glen (1994) and Humphrey (1987) argue that since the 1940s, black women have been paid less than men, generally receiving between 57% and 65% of what men earn and also of what white women earn. This according to Benya (2009) “clearly shows that division of labour impacts on the relative wages paid to both women and men”. As a result of these differentials in salaries, poverty especially among South African female headed households has been exacerbated. This study is however concerned with how South African women can fight these gender stereotypes and inequalities in the workplace.

2.4 Women in macho occupations in South Africa

Today, it is common to find women in the workplace in virtually every role that you find men in. There are female doctors, lawyers, engineers, heavy vehicle drivers, bus drivers, pilots and dentists. Women are police officers, fire fighters and ambulance drivers. There are wives that are construction foreman, and grandmothers that are CEOs of major, Fortune 500 companies. Though the glass ceiling still exists, more and more women have found ways to cross gender barriers and soar to heights that were never before imagined possible. More than ever before in history, men and women are

becoming equals in the workplace (Levenson 2006). However, due to the gender discrimination and other social factors women's' numbers decrease with time.

"A married woman leaving her home each day going to work is familiar yet controversial." (Jephcott1962: 32). This woman is seen by some as a symbol of freedom while to some she is "epitome of irresponsibility and neglect". Mothers who leave their homes are seen as uncaring towards their children. Many women especially in countries in the South have added to their traditional role of wife and mother; that of paid employment. According to Jephcott (1962), "poverty has driven some wives out to work". In the economic situation of most South African families, a woman earning a salary is not just a simple necessity but a requirement and as a way of supplement the husband or partners' salary, yet for a single mother that will be the only source of income. How society perceives a working woman can have an impact on how they are treated at the workplace. Mkunu (2005:67) states that "the journey of emancipation of women in Africa has been, and still is, long and painful". Women are faced with numerous challenges which hinder their career choices and success. Despite the evolution of many new ways of doing things in the 21st century; women in Africa are still under the cultural tradition and poverty (Mkunu 2005).

It is argued by Onsongo (2007) that African women did not only suffer racial prejudice during the apartheid era but; they were also discriminated against on the basis of gender. Fletcher (2000:24) asserts that "The effect of apartheid on women is incalculable. According to the world conference of the United Nations in 1980, "African women in South Africa being both black and female, suffer triple oppression" The report

added that as women, they have to contend with the fact that they are regarded as dependents and as inferior to men; as such they are treated as even further discriminated within the labour market. Further, Benya (2009) argues that some men find it hard to work in teams with women because of the traditional belief that a woman's place is in the kitchen. Therefore, due to these beliefs women in South Africa are still faced with discrimination because of their gender.

Long distance bus driving is a lonesome occupation where a driver travels for long distances alone over a period of time. Furthermore, the allocation of shifts work may be difficult for some women as mothers. As a result, women have found it hard to balance working lives and family responsibilities. At the same time, women may still face stereotyping by employers that they take more time off and are absent at short notice due to family problems as compared to their male workmates. To support Williams (1992) and Hartman (2010) argue that some employers still consider women more suited to support positions because they regard them as physically weaker and not in positions that would require physical strength or endurance, or situations that would take them away for long periods of time.

According to the International Transport Workers' Federation (2011), some of the problems experienced by women bus drivers are inability to access toilets and gender violence during shifts. However, there is a perception that women's bodies due to their biological make up, they cannot withstand prolonged sitting therefore they cannot be allocated to long distance shifts which require them to sit for more than four hours at a time. Kessler- Harris (1982) in Deaux and Ullman (1983:39) argued that prolonged

sitting for women caused “physical debility, laxity of moral fibre, vertigo, constipation, varicose veins and displacement of the uterus”

According to the literature given above the research investigated the challenges faced by women in traditional male occupations, how they cope in their day to day activities and how they demystify perceptions about them.

2.5 Work and trade unions in South Africa

The inclusion of women in the transport sector as long distance bus drivers has an impact on how the male dominated unions perceive them. Applebum and Stella (1999) claim that, women have for years suffered injustices and marginalisation as a result of cultural disabilities, which has affected their activities in many fields of endeavor including their participation in trade unionism. Hence the underrepresentation of women in most union leadership positions (ITF 2005). This obtains that in trade unions as much as other spheres of society, and accordingly women’s representation in the unions can be limited.

Clawson (2003) argues that, unions have neglected women and gone to the extent of excluding them from best jobs while dominated by men and directed by the male culture. Women as bus drivers, challenge not only the workplace culture but it threatens the masculinity of trade unions, thus presenting difficulties in the consideration of women’s issues in trade union meetings. One is not likely to get into a leadership position unless they join in the first place Furthermore, some women may not join trade unions because they do not know how it would benefit them, lack of time because of

family commitments and fear of being punished by the employer (Garcia 2002).The times and venues where unions meet might not be conducive to women hence they do not attend meetings.

Men's domination in unions can also be a cause of inequalities for women and men. Martine (2002) argues that trade unions do not have feminist sympathies because there is under-representation by women in trade union decision-making positions. (Garcia 2002:22) noted that women held less than a third of senior decision making positions in over 60% of trade unions world -wide. This has an impact on women's representation as well as their ability to have their voices heard. Clawson (2003) notes that union leadership all around the world is male dominated; hence women's grievances are not addressed fully.

The South African Transport and Allied Workers Union has a membership of around 128 000 transport members, yet currently there is only one woman in the national leadership and two women in eight of their departments (SATAWU 2011).This may also lead to the long distance women bus drivers' challenges not being addressed or being swept under the carpet, because there is not enough representation of women union members in the decision making body.

Buhlungu (2010) observes that despite women's increasing involvement in the labour movement during the past thirty years, they remain significantly under-represented. He blames this on the insecure forms of work that most South African women occupy. This has been supported by Garcia (2002) who argues that the lower rate of trade union membership by women is not due to women being less inclined to join a trade union,

but to the fact that they are concentrated in sectors where the rates of trade union membership are low anyway. In South Africa, most women lack relevant skills, and are therefore confined to the service sector, domestic, service, retail, agriculture and forestry which are not unionized (Buhlungu 2010).

Tsomondo (2011) argues that gender representation is related to the sector in which unions operate. In previously male dominated occupations like mining and metal work, women only constitute 10% of the total population (Benya 2010). However, to complement the fact that women are mostly dominant in pink collar jobs, the commercial and catering services represented by South African Democratic Teachers Union constitutes of 60% female members affiliates (SACCAWU 2010). However, some women who have made it to the trade union leadership positions are blamed for focusing on women's rights and they are accused by Garcia (2002) of dividing the working class.

Josette in (Garcia 2002) notes that, quite often, women who have responsibilities prefer to practice self-censorship on women's issues rather than be accused dividing the trade union, making specific demands in the context of a general movement. Consequently, they refuse to get involved in the field of women's rights and to be stuck with the image of the "resident feminist." The women are afraid of being labeled and excluded if they pursue women's rights and needs. Therefore one can still say 'It is still a man's world' operating on man's terms under men's rule. Buhlungu (2010) illustrated the percentage of woman in the Trade Unions in South Africa.

Table 1.0 Gender distribution of COSATU members (%)

SEX	1994	1998	2004
Male	67	70	66
Female	33	30	34

There has been insignificant increase of women in the trade unions since democratization and the information represented on the table above, the percentage of women joining trade unions remains generally lower than the percentage of men.

COSATU is the largest trade union federation in South Africa representing more than 66% of the workforce (COSATU 2010). Below is a tabulation of the gender distribution in COSATU in South Africa from 2004.

Table 1.1 Women in COSATU

Title	**Percentage**	**Source**
Women in Workplace in South Africa.	+50	ILO Global trends (2010)
Women T.U members COSATU	37	COSATU gender policy (2008)
Women T.U leaders COSATU	19	Tshoaedi and Hlela (2006)

From the table, women make up more than half of the workforce population yet they only constitute 37% of the membership and only 19 % of them are in leadership positions. These leadership positions are mainly from shop steward position up to head of department.

2.6 Summary

Based on the scenario discussed on what women in various occupations face, the research investigated the challenges faced by long distance women bus drivers. What mechanism they use to cope and how they implement them. The research also examined the extent to which the unions and male dominated companies are providing an enabling environment for women to join the previously male dominated occupations in South Africa.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this research is to explore the experiences of women who have entered into traditionally male dominated occupations in the transport sector like bus driving. This chapter gives an overview of the qualitative research methodology with multiple techniques such as semi-structured interviews, observation and documentary analysis used in the case study. It also outlines the rationale for selecting qualitative research methods and techniques. In addition, the relationship between researcher and respondents, the reliability and validity of the study and the sampling technique are discussed. Finally, access and ethics issues, data analysis methods and the limitations of the research are discussed.

3.2 Research design

The research used qualitative research techniques. Qualitative research provides the researcher with rich contextual perspectives (Merriam 2009). Babbie and Mouton (2001:272) argue that qualitative research is an “approach according to which researchers attempt to study human behaviour from the perspective of research participants”. This includes the interpretation of data into words through the observation of experiences, feelings and opinions of the interviewees. They go on to clarify that qualitative research is conducted in the natural setting of research participants as

opposed to artificial settings of experiments. Thus, qualitative researchers gather accurate data from the perspective of their research participants and they do not believe that their findings are universally valid and that they hold regardless of time and place. Hence the quality of qualitative research depends on researchers' ability to get close to their research participants in order to generate legitimate insider perspectives (Babbie and Mouton, 2001).

Burton (2000) argues that "it has become more acceptable in recent years to use two or more methods" The research made use of triangulation of methods, through the use of in-depth interviews and observation. Triangulation of methods allows the researcher to "view the same phenomena from different angles giving the researcher a better understanding of the problem." (Babie and Mouton 2001:125). Triangulation of measures in sound research, according to Neuman (1994) means using different types of measures, or data collection techniques, in order to examine the same variable. Hence, the researcher used of triangulation of measures in order to complement one technique with others.

3.3 Case study

The study's unit of analysis or case of study is AUTOPAX Bus Company. From their countrywide depots only two were selected due to their proximity to the researcher. These were Harmony in Johannesburg and the Pretoria depot. Smircich (1983) argues that case studies are either used to explain things in a qualitative way or to generalize from one, two or few more cases to a whole population of cases. Therefore, case studies are essential in qualitative research as they provide a great amount of

description and detail. Deaux (1976:10) concludes that case studies “are primary examples and means of approaching qualitative researches”.

AUTOPAX was specifically chosen as it is one of the largest road passenger Companies in South Africa with a fleet of 900 buses and a total of 430 drivers 34 of them are women. The Company has two distinctive subsidiaries namely, Translux and City to City. The two brands have played a significant role in transporting and servicing long distance travelers. Its route network covers most parts of South Africa and across borders to neighbouring countries like Lesotho, Mozambique and Swaziland. It has, since the adoption of The Employment Equity Act (1998) which claimed to promote equal opportunity and fair treatment in employment through the elimination of unfair discrimination by sex by employing women as bus drivers.

3.4 Data collection technique

Interviews and observations were used to collect data from the research participants. Creswell (2003) argues that a semi-structured interview format allows the researcher to probe more deeply into a particular situation than a structured interview. Interviews are usually used as a data collection technique by researchers who assume that it is possible to investigate elements of the social world by asking people to talk about themselves and also that it is possible to construct knowledge by listening to and interpreting what research participants say (Manson 2002). An interview according to Denzin and Lincoln (2000:45) “is a conversation which a researcher encourages his/her informants to relate in their own terms, experiences and attitudes that are relevant to the research problem”.

The researcher conducted twenty interviews mostly with human resource officers, shop stewards of trade unions, driver trainers, supervisors, operations managers, gender representation from SATAWU and COSATU and the key informants: long distance bus drivers who were women. Former male and female drivers were also interviewed to give their experience and opinion on the employment of women as professional bus drivers.

This study also used looked at the natural environment in which the women bus drivers worked. The researcher travelled with five women bus drivers during their shifts while observing their surroundings, their reaction to situations, their attitudes and those of their passengers and colleagues. The researcher became an active, direct observer since she was involved in most of the activities that were being done by the female drivers like packing bags, offloading, checking in clients, and sleeping at the same time and venues with them.

Merriam (2009) argues that using observation as a data collection technique will provide the researcher with a range of information on a large group of people. Creswell (2003:186) suggests that this method is also useful in exploring topics that maybe uncomfortable for participants to discuss. Neuman (2000) points out that observation and participation of the researcher in the current social setting on the subject which researchers want to penetrate and learn about it also allows them to gather relevant information. However, human subjects can change their behaviour if they know that they are being watched and this may distort the information being collected (Neuman 2000). The researcher used some of the notes collected during observations as aids in

the interviews as a way of seeking clarification on some behaviour exhibited during the trips.

The researcher also used documentary analysis techniques to collect necessary data to answer her research questions. Documentation that was availed to her included the minutes for some meetings which were held between shop stewards and management on challenges faced by long distance bus drivers both male and female during their duties. SATAWU also provided the researcher with documentation highlighting some of the programmes they have lined up for their gender department. On using documentary analysis the researcher found out about the primary data that may not be accurately provided by secondary sources of data.

3.5 Sampling strategy

Purposive sampling was employed in this thesis. The researcher used purposive sampling because the study focused on personal experiences of a particular group of people (women bus drivers). The researcher therefore chose the ten women bus drivers from a list from the operations managers' schedule of trips and destinations. The choice of the five women bus drivers I travelled with was based on the fact that they were the permanently employed on those routes.

Purposive sampling was also used in selecting two shop stewards, two male drivers and two personnel from the human resources department at AUTOPAX, two women each from COSATU and SATAWU gender departments since they are positions only held by one person in a company and they are usually women. Kinder (1985) asserts

that the emphasis on purposive sampling should be on the typicality of elements. Hence, the researcher used this method because of the typicality of the positions held by all the participants chosen using this method.

3.6 Reliability and validity

Reliability implies that the method of conducting a study or results from it can be reproduced or replicated by other researchers (Neuman 1994). Validity according to Dooley (1995) is the appropriateness, meaningfulness and usefulness of the specific conclusions made from the measurement. For any research, reliability and validity is of paramount importance. Reactivity, according to Dooley (1995), is the behavioural change caused by the measuring procedures which can threaten research validity. He argues reliability determines whether or not the data produced is free from errors of measurement and consistency. In this research unfortunately, reactivity could not completely be avoided. When carrying out this research it was important for the researcher to ensure that the measurements were valid, reliable and that there would not be little or no reactivity from the respondents which might have negative impact on the results. Since there is no way of avoiding reactivity, the researcher kept it in her mind during the research.

3.6 Access and Ethical Considerations

All the participants in this research voluntarily provided information needed for the collection of data through signing consent forms which were provide and explained to them by the researcher. The researcher took the idea of Burton (2000) who stresses

that, in any research, co-operation must be voluntary. The researcher avoided deception as much as possible and confidentiality, privacy, and anonymity were adhered to at all times. During the research, ethical norms were adhered to at all times making sure that no harm was inflicted onto the participants. The researcher informed the participants of their right to withdraw from the research at any stage even after information has been gathered. The researcher emphasized as she noticed that during the research some participants were uncomfortable answering questions they felt might get them fired by management.

In order to put interviewees at ease the researcher was cautious about asking some questions that might be sensitive. Hence she asked some of the interviewees if they could write down some of the answers on a piece of paper. Some of the interviews took more than 30 minutes so the researcher asked some of the interviewees to inform her when they would be ready and during a time which might not disturb their schedule. All information was communicated to the interviewees before conducting in-depth interviews. Thus the respondents were informed that they could withdraw from the research at any time if they wished to, even after the interviews. The researcher explained that the participants' identities were safe because she intended to use pseudonyms where direct quotations were used in order to protect the identity of respondents. This made some of the participants more relaxed and free to answer sensitive questions about management and some of the pressing issues. However one of the subjects kept asking where this report was to be kept because they also wanted to check if their names were not mentioned. To remove suspicion and to curb informants' nervousness, the researcher kept briefing the participants on the purpose of

the study, how it might benefit other women and how the information collected was to be used and kept.

In the early months of the research the bus company was skeptical about giving the researcher access to the research site fearing that I was there to expose them but after a lot of convincing and explaining they finally gave me unlimited access to all of their depots.

3.7 Strengths and Limitations of the study

Due to the limited time of about three months the researcher had to conduct research on one Transport Company. With limited resources and capacity the researcher could not carry out the research on all women in typically male occupations and this might have compromised external validity of the research. Financial constrains also forced the researcher to take only five trips instead of travelling with all the ten female long distance bus drivers. According to Neuman (1994), researchers are often criticised for being biased when expressing the views of rarely heard perspectives, what Becker (1970) called “the hierarchy of credibility”. The purposive sampling method in this research may have posed a limitation to this research in that it was not representative.

Language was a huge barrier in collecting data during the observation period since the researcher is a foreigner and had no knowledge of the local languages. For some unique behaviour or comments displayed, the researcher had to rely on the locals for translation some of whom were not totally comfortable in speaking English.

The researchers' use of triangulation of measures was a way of reducing limitations of the research instruments which were used to gather information; this allowed the extension of the strength of each method.

3.8 Data analysis

For this study, use of qualitative research meant the data analysis used non-statistical procedures. Therefore, the researcher was more interested in interpreting data in words bringing out the true experiences, feelings and opinions of the participants. An analytical and interpretive procedure was adopted with focus on effective transcribing of oral data and coding, content synthesis, and interpreting this data under themes.

CHAPTER FOUR: EXPERIENCES, CHALLENGES AND COPING STRATEGIES

4.1 Introduction

Women traditionally have been invested with responsibility for taking care of the household and raising children, women who work outside the home are often faced with the issue of combining the two roles in some manageable way. Organizational theorists have suggested that working women are typically faced with simultaneous role demands, that require them to tend to household responsibilities at the same time that they are engaged in paid employment outside the home (Deaux and Ullman1983:24-26). Therefore this chapter seeks to explore the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women long distance bus drivers

4.2 Background of respondents

Ten women long distance bus drivers (Cindy, Terry, Nelly, Tapy, Lolly, Sindiso, Pana, Nozy, Thandeka and Thato) from different backgrounds, age groups and work stations were interviewed. This section gives the background of each woman, their work experiences, challenges at work and how they are coping in the traditionally male dominated occupation.

Cindy is a married mother of one and is a college drop out. She joined bus driving after seeing an advertisement for a learnership in 2007. She has been working for the company for four years. Her husband, knowing the work environment his wife would be joining, encouraged her and helped in filling out the forms and he delivered them and

was very instrumental in following up the application. Both Cindys' own family and that of her in-laws are supportive of her but after one year on the job the husband started getting over protective of her and irritated by the days spent away from home and the children.

Cindy works well with her supervisors. Some of the challenges Cindy alluded to are; that when paired on the same shift with a male colleague she tends to feel helpless and spoilt sometimes because males will drive all the way to the final destination without giving her a chance.

"These guys treat us differently because we are women and I do not like it". When she complains about it the male colleague argues that "I am a man, I cannot let passengers see you driving while I am sleeping or seated". Cindy

This is also the same situation when it comes to loading and unloading the luggage: the male colleague also tells her to oversee the passengers while he attends to the luggage "the heavy stuff is for men" he says. Cindy

With the passengers Cindy said that it was difficult during her first year to convince them that she was going to take them to their final destination. But, since she has been driving on the same route for four years now she believes the passengers are used to seeing her and do not look surprised anymore. Her first trip on her own without the supervisor was the most difficult one because there was an old man who refused to be driven by a woman. The trip was delayed because the old man had to be convinced by her male colleagues to stay on the bus and was assured that the lady driver had

enough experience to take him home. During the trip the old man kept peeping at Cindy to see if she was awake. During trips she feels she is being evaluated by passengers.

“Men are sometimes surprised by our driving and they thank us when we get them to their destinations, but women our age just look with that eye, I think they are jealous of us or something”. Cindy

Accommodation was what Cindy thought was inappropriate for drivers especially women. She said that the lodge they put up at is a busy place and she does not get enough sleep.

“You cannot rest peacefully here because commercial sex workers are always going in and out and when their customers refuse to pay they fight and make noise throwing missiles. How can I sleep honestly?”Cindy

Cindy has put several complains with the management but she is always told that the male colleagues want it there and they cannot pay for different accommodation for drivers sleeping in the same town.

Cindy complained about her most pressing challenge,

“As a woman I have different biological make up to men, when I am on my monthly period my back aches and I need to refresh more often but since we have prescribed stops along the way I feel uncomfortable and this makes me lose my focus sometimes”. Cindy

On how she has coped in this occupation, Cindy has tried to fit in by engaging in conversations with her male colleagues but sometimes the language is provocative and this is the time she withdraws.

"If you can't beat them join them." Cindy

Cindy feels she cannot wear dresses and heels to work because of the nature of her work and because she has to act masculine for passengers to respect her and for her male colleagues to see her as one of them. So she has to wear jean trousers and T-shirts every time she drives. When handling passengers she has to be firm otherwise they would not take her seriously.

"During breaks they think because I am a woman I will give them extra time...I made one man run after the bus one day after he had ignored me when I told him that the bus was to depart in 5 minutes...I heard him tell his friend that women are never on time. After the incident the passengers knew I meant what I say during breaks". Cindy

Nelly is in her late 50's and is a separated mother of three, her last born who is in high school. She started bus driving in the 1990's before it was common to see women driving long distances. She said she joined the occupation because of the challenge it offered

"I wanted to prove that women can also do the jobs man can do." Nelly

She drove for five years until she was promoted. She joined the occupation during the apartheid era and she had to challenge both racism and sexism,

“It was a difficult time because I had to put up with racist and sexist comments but this made me stronger, I knew one day many women would join this occupation and the society would respect us.” Nelly

Besides racism and sexism she said that the buses they used in the early 1990’s had big steering wheels and manual gears which made it difficult for her because she was short and heavily built she would be sore every time she went to bed. She almost got raped by a drunken passenger during one of the trips when she was off duty and resting at the back of the bus.

“I feel this man just wanted to seduce me and show me that even if I could do the same job as a man I am still a woman.” Nelly

The society at that time shunned her and made remarks such as

“Who does she think she is, can’t she join the others in the kitchens if she wants to feed her family?” Nelly

For Nelly she said since it was a new phenomenon in South Africa male colleagues felt threatened by her presence and they would not sit with her during breaks at the cafeteria,

“I would hear them talking about me, they would say that she thinks she is now a man...we will show her, her place one day.” Nelly

During trips male colleagues would refuse to be paired with her complaining that woman cannot drive long distances hence they would be forced to drive their shifts and load

and unload luggage. She would also get passengers, who would refuse to be driven by a woman,

"*This made me angry sometimes but because of the training I received I would convince them to sit and if they noticed anything they did not like while I was driving they could call my supervisor and would be transferred to another bus.... after 30minutes they would be sleeping." Nelly*

As a mother and wife she felt she did not give her children and husband enough attention, and she feels the occupation made her separate from her husband because they would always argue over her long hours and days away from the house and the children. When driving on her own at night she used to feel unsafe.

On how she copied with the occupation she said that she has always had a strong character and it was perfected by the job because she dealt with different passengers and colleagues with different personalities. She also claimed that she knows why she needed the money so she would keep quiet and do her job.

Thato is in her late 50's, single, a mother of five and a grandmother of four. She went to school up to standard 7 in a neighbouring country where she got her code 10 license and then applied for a learnership in 2006 completed the same year and got her code 14 which allowed her do drive buses and heavy vehicles.

"My motivation to drive came from my children, they needed food and there was an opportunity so I grabbed it with both hands." If given any chance to leave bus driving and work somewhere else Nana said she would not waste any chance.

Since 2006 she has been laid off once in 2008 only to be rehired again in 2010 for the world Cup final and since then she has been employed on temporary basis. She spends five nights away from home every week and she stays in a room in one of the townships in Johannesburg.

"I had to send my children to stay with my mother in the rural areas because I would rarely see them and spend time with them. This job squeezes everything you have got and by the time you get home to see your children you will be so tired and you do not give them all the attention they need. It's a good thing they stay with my mother; at least I get to see them during school holidays." Thato

Passengers sometimes do not listen to her instructions until they see her behind the stirring wheel*. "Passengers usually ignore my instructions because I am a woman. They only listen when my male colleague gives the same instructions. I don't think they see us women as people we are just women." Thato*

Thato was very hurt emotionally when male drivers refused in her face to be paired with her during shifts.

"The other day I heard one of them (male colleague) complaining that he could not work with a woman because they are slow and they would delay the trip and that he will do all the heavy work." Thato

Passengers doubted if they were going to make it on time to their final destination if the woman drove.

“Women are too careful and too cautious therefore we will be delayed.” male Passenger on the bus

Her company does not provide her with a uniform because she is not permanently employed hence the disrespect from the passengers when she asks for tickets or where passengers wanted to be dropped off.

“They think I am just an ordinary person until they see me behind the wheel” Thato

As a copying strategy Thato said she prayed to God everyday to be able to deal with passengers and to be employed permanently one day so that she will be able to get more money to look after her children.

“All I have is my faith and my Ubuthu to keep me going on because I am not eligible to join a trade union. So I cannot afford to make any demands for improvement of my working conditions. Who will stand for me if I get fired?”Thato

Terry is a single mother of one and a college drop out in her late 20’s who took up bus driving as an occupation in 2005 when she heard about the learnership. She loves bus driving because she enjoys travelling, meeting new people every day and just being able to drive a heavy vehicle.

“I draw a lot of passengers’ and other road users’ attention and I love it because it shows I am unique.” Terry

Although she loves her job very much, Terry complains that it has stripped her of her social life. She spends most her time away on trips and when she is off duty she tries to spend time with her child.

“For a young person like me this job is stressful I don’t get to socialize because most of the time I am away.” Terry

She has had her fair share of challenges as a woman bus driver, she has met disrespectful passengers who would call her supervisors to report that she was rude and she was not driving properly.

“She thinks that it is because she looks younger than her age and passengers think she is not mature enough for the job.” Terry

She works well with her colleagues but during her first year some male colleagues refused to be paired with her during trips because they thought she was too young for the job and that she would cause accidents.

“My trainer had faith in me because he had trained me well and knew I was ready for the job. When they all refused I was paired with a female colleague and the trip was enjoyable. When we came back safely that is when they wanted to be paired with us.” Terry

On how she has been coping since 2005 Terry said that she had a very supportive father and brothers.

“If the male side of my family supported me then I knew I was not wrong in choosing this occupation.” Terry

She knew that the occupation she was joining was male dominated so she has improved her decision making skills and how she deals with troublesome passengers.

“I knew what I was getting myself into when I got this job, I knew it was going to be rough, lonely and tiring so I braved up for it and asked God for strength.” Terry

She goes to the gym to keep her slim figure because she feels if she gains weight she will get tired easily during trips and she feels it makes her fit for packing and unpacking heavy luggage.

“I have learnt that men will be men and fighting for equality on everything with them will never work so when it comes to showing off their masculinity during loading heavy luggage on the bus I let them.” Terry

Terry joined a trade union as a coping strategy; she believes they will fight for her when it comes to working conditions, salary adjustment and when she is going for disciplinary hearings.

Terry suggested that passengers, management, colleagues and other road users should see women bus drivers as drivers and not to feel pity or hold them on a pedestal as this makes them look weak.

“What a man can do I can also do it better but at a different pace because of our biological build up.” Terry

Tapy is a single mother of two and she joined the profession during the world cup and has been employed as a contract worker since then. She also joined the profession through the learnership programme. Tapy complained about the occupation and how it has made her change the way she dresses.

“You can never look smart on this job because of the grease on some parts of the bus like when opening the boots and when checking for oil before you take the bus for a trip. As a woman the passengers expect us to look clean every time and when you do not they give you that look” Tapy

Tapy said that one of the challenges she faced was the management is made up of man who do not understand some of the problems they face as women.

“They (management) sometimes do not take us serious when you tell them that you have period pain and you are not able to concentrate properly at work because of the excruciating pain. They have never felt it so they think that we are just being weaklings and looking for an excuse to bunk work.” Tapy

Since her children are still very young Tapy feel she will be neglecting them by sleeping away from home for three nights in a week or even more nights during peak holidays.

“My children complain all the time because they are too young to understand that this is what is bringing food to the table. I sometimes wish I was married I would stay home full time and attend all consultation and sports days at school.” Tapy

When she gets home from work as a mother she is expected to cook, clean and be a mother something men do not do after work.

“As a woman I feel over burdened.” Tapy

Tapy suggested that the bus companies should employ more women as line managers.

“*At least they know what women really need for them to work productively.” Tapy*

From her family she wished that they would start understanding and tolerating that she has to work. As a coping strategy Tapy said that she has adapted to the life and is very happy to do the same job as men.

“We are not different it’s only that our bodies are built differently I can do what Jack does and even better and smarter.” Tapy

Lolly is married and a mother of four children in her late 40’s. She loves being a mother and a wife but she said that it was frustrating when she cannot play that role when she is away at work. Her children are very supportive of her and they even carry photos of her driving to show off to friends, she joined this occupation because she has always felt that she is unique and wanted to prove the society that women can also do what men can do. She wanted to be a train operator but when she could not get it, she went for the bus driving learnership.

“The challenges I get from work are unsupportive fellow women.” Lolly

She said that on one occasion a fellow women bus driver spoke negatively about her at work and this made the management doubt her capability as a driver.

“On this job you have to be careful of you be friend coz some can be jealousy of you.” Lolly

Safety is one of Lollys' concerns. She leaves home around 4am to catch a taxi into Johannesburg and then another to the depot. She stays in one of the highest criminal areas in Johannesburg and she prays everyday that she gets to work safe.

Lolly said that the only problem she has with passengers is when they call the management to report her driving.

"This one soldier almost got me fired, he complained that I was not driving properly and swerving a lot. After investigations it was found out that the same person complains every time when being driven by women bus drivers." Lolly

Being married and being a mother is also a challenge to Lolly

"My husband sometimes gets jealous and calls me in the middle of the night to check if I am sleeping alone." Lolly

She said she misses a lot in her children's lives; things like sports days and consultation days because of the kind of work she is in. One thing she says that has kept her insane and on the job is her children in that they understand that she has to do this so that they go to school.

Lollys' coping strategies are praying, visiting family and friends every time she is off duty and telling herself that she is unique and she will fit into this previously male dominated occupation with her head held up high.

Sindiso is a divorced mother of two and she had been a bus driver since 2010. She has been a single mother for one and a half years now. When she started the learnership in

2009 she was still married but she says when she started working away from home her marriage started falling apart. They would always fight with the husband about the nights she did not spend at home.

Some of the challenges she has alluded are:

“As women we are not familiar with motor mechanics so checking for things like water, oil and reporting what is exactly wrong with the bus is difficult.” Sindiso

She feels her children will resent her because of the three to four nights she spends away from home in a week.

“I am not around when they are sick or when they need to be picked up from school.” Sindiso

Sindiso complained that all her line managers are men and they do not understand some of the reasons why women drivers sometimes need off days.

“They think that it’s just laziness and a way of dodging work.” Sindiso

On how she is coping she believes God is her protector and will always look after her and her children while she is away.

“On our own we are useless we need God to look after us, people die in these roads every day. Passengers are sometimes a problem but when you show them that you can also be tough they leave you to do your job.” Sindiso

When she is off duty she enjoys dressing in high heels, short dresses because she says she misses them a lot. She has to wear slacks or long skirts because of the way the buses are made.

"The steps are high and you have to pack and unpack luggage, how do you bend in a short skirt and high heels?" Sindiso

When she is on duty she wears tights under her long skirts because of safety reasons

"I wear tights underneath because when getting over to the driver's seat you have to jump over the engine box and I would not want to attract unnecessary attention from male passengers." Sindiso

As a coping strategy Sindiso goes to parties and church whenever she is off duty.

"I have told myself that I have to love this job and put up with all it throws my way because it puts food on the table for me and the children." Sindiso

Thandeka is a divorced mother of four children. She is also a shop steward who has been driving long distance buses for more than five years. She was motivated to join the occupation because she had seen an article of the first woman bus driver at Metro Bus Company.

"I saw that woman and told myself that I can also drive buses, visit new places and meet different people... at that moment I knew what I wanted to do with my life." Thandeka

As a single mother Thandeka asked around on how she could become a bus driver until she came across the learnership programme. She said that her family was important to her since she was the soul bread winner. Her children are all grown up and have all finished school. She does not miss them as much as she used to when they were still in school and since she could not afford a maid she had to leave them alone for three nights in week.

Challenges she has faced on the job was adapting to the male dominated occupation.

“The society tells you that women should respect men and when I started working with them they became colleagues and it was very difficult for me to adjust and treat them as equals.”Thandeka

She experienced sexist jokes and discrimination by the male colleagues but as time went on she learnt to talk back using the same language they used. Now they respect her and the jokes are not as hateful as they used to be for her. Passengers would also pass sexist jokes as well but Thandeka has leant to deal with them in a respectful manner that will not make the passengers angry. The society has embraced the idea that women can also do what men can do but they have classified some of the occupations that are restricted only to men.

“How does a women explain not sleeping at home and cooking for her family?...these women should join occupations that are done during the day not over night...who will protect her if she is harassed on the bus?” David a passenger

As a coping strategy Thandeka believes God and her ancestors look after her all the time.

“I pray every day before I leave the house for Gods’ and my ancestors guidance on my shift and to protect my children while I am away” Thandeka

She also joined the union as a way of coping with work. Her union is her protector and she feels safe being represented by it. As a shop steward she complained the structure of the unions.

“These unions have men at the top and I really feel they do not fully represent our grievances since we have some cases which have been pending for the past three years.” Thandeka

In meetings she feels when a women raises a point they are not taken seriously but if that question was to be supported by a man it is given full attention.

Nozy is a divorcee and a single mother of one in her late 20’s. Her divorce made her think about looking for employment so as to be able to look after her child. She was motivated to be a bus driver by a friend who convinced her to get a code 14 drivers license which allows one to drive heavy vehicles. When she saw the advert for women bus drivers during the 2010 world cup she applied and got employment. She started off by driving local buses and after a while she was permanently employed as a long distance bus driver.

She is short and has a small body statue that passengers are usually surprised to see her behind the stirring wheel. The management is all male so it is a problem to air her

concerns because they believe they do not understand her. On the road she says she has to do "*double defensive driving*" because other male drivers on the road want to cut in front of her because she is a woman.

"Some drivers on the highways get distracted when they realize that it's a woman driving a bus and they sometimes delay the traffic and they also distract me because you will be thinking that there is something wrong with your bus." Nozy

Females have a different biological build up from men and this has been a cause of concern for Nozy. She complained that she had a miscarriage of her second baby because she had to work in the first trimester of her pregnancy. During menstruation she says that her back is sore and she gets cramps which disturb her driving. She also needs constant bathroom visits but they have prescribed refresher stops.

As a coping strategy Nozy says that she prays believes God gave her this job for a purpose. Passengers complain about the speed but she is used to it and she explains to them that the company has a 100km policy on maximum speed.

"They think that as a woman I am afraid of speeding" Nozy

She said she handles the passengers like family because she addresses them as mama, Tata, Bhudhi and Sisi because she believes the will also respect her in return.

"I know why I am doing this job and I will do all I can to get what I want from it. I won't let drunk, rude passengers distract me." Nozy

Pana is also a single mother of two never married and looking after her children on her own. She joined the occupation because of the learnership and she has leant to love the job as it takes her to different places and meeting different people. Pana has had an ugly experience as a young long distance bus driver. She was almost raped by a passenger during her time off the shift while she was resting at the back of the bus.

“He was just being a man, he whispered to me that even though I can drive and load on and off luggage on to the bus like a man I am still a woman and he could over power me...I cried like a baby until other passengers came to my rescue.” Pana

After this experience Pana sees all men as potential rapists and she has adopted what she called a man like behaviour as a coping strategy.

“I have become rough and when I realize a man is coming onto me I do not scream like a woman a clench my fists and get ready to hit him where it hurts most... these passengers make you a person different from who you were when you joined the profession.” Pana

As another strategy to cope in the male dominated occupation Pana said she now talks rough and dresses in boots and safety shoes all day long just like the men she works with. Although she has received some sexist remarks she says that she had leant to block them out and focus on her core business which was bus driving. She is also a member of a trade union and she holds them with high regard.

"Even though some of our problems are not addressed in time at least I would have told someone my grievances and I feel relieved after that... if I feel I have been mistreated I tell my shop steward and they solve the problem sometimes" Pana

4.3 Structure of the bus company

The bus company used for this research is a provider of national long distance and rural connecting road based services that allow government to direct services to areas that are neglected in regards. The company has approximately 600 employees of which 450 are drivers. Out of the 450 drivers, 34 are females showing that a female bus driver constitutes only 7.6% of the total (South African Department of transport). This shows that according to the quota system that mandates certain minorities be given a fixed percent of jobs, regardless of performance or abilities; the company has not yet reached it.

4.4 Access Presentation of Women

This section looks at how many women are employed as long distance bus drivers and how they have been employed and why they have joined this profession. In addition it also looks on their representation In terms of numbers in the company.

4.5 Getting employed

Most of the women bus drivers entered the profession through learnership and a two applied for the job because they had code 14 which allowed them to drive heavy vehicles. Amongst the respondents women below the age of 40 were trained and

employed for the 2010 world cup while those above 40 joined because they were interested in the job, wanted to prove a point in the case of Nelly and Lolly but above all they all needed employment so as to look after their children.

The employment equity act made the company start the employment of women. The act protects workers and job seekers from unfair discrimination on the basis or gender or race. One of the managers when asked why the company has started employing women

"It's because of these rights that women have nowadays, and the Government has to force us to adhere to them. They now want to be everywhere were men used to work." Human Resources manager (HR)

The HR manager confirmed that since the employment equity act was put in 1998 they have been forced to employ women across all occupations. In 2000 the bus company employed women as mechanics but due to the heavy machinery and the environment, all the women resigned and they were offered learnership in bus driving instead.

The learnership has been running for 5 years now and out of the 300 learnership the company only took out 22 women drivers. The reason being some women failed, some got pregnant and could not get back on the programme, some dropped because of the pressure and simply could not finish the learnership due to other factors.

In the case of Nelly who joined the occupation during the apartheid era and she recalled going through what she referred to as triple jeopardy, she experienced segregation during the apartheid era.

"I was under fire from three angles racism, sexism and class" Nelly

I drove them Cape Town but I could not use the same toilets as they did...it was funny I had their lives in the palm of my hands but they kept frustrating me."

In relation to the above South Africa's National Policy Framework for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality (1998) argues that, Differential access to employment opportunities exists. Whilst theoretically women currently have access to a broader scope of position in the labour market, these new opportunities are accessible to a narrow pool of women who have had access to skills development, education and training. In large measure, women's employment remains either within the traditional female occupations or within the domestic and farming sectors all too often as casual workers. They are concentrated in positions which are low paying and which have high rates of turnover. In bus driving, the women who are called for the learnership programme have to be 38 years or younger and to be in possession of a code 8 drivers license. To acquire such a license comes at a cost of ZAR5000 which includes learners' license, driving lessons, booking fees, and hiring of the test vehicle. This amount is not formidable considering the South African minimum wage which ranges from ZAR 1,040 to ZAR2, 000 per month (minimum-wage.org).

4.6 Why women have joined the previously male dominated occupations

Given some of the responses that some of the respondent such as Lolly, Nelly and Thato they joined the occupation because they wanted to prove to the society and men

that women can also be employed in the occupations that men are densely populated in and prove that they can even do it better.

For Cindy it was a matter of what was available at that moment as a way of fending for her child. She has gone back to school to study so that she leaves bus driving and work normal hours as this occupation is causing arguments with her husband. For Terry, Sindiso, Nozy, Thandeka, Tapy and Pana they all joined the occupation because it was the only occupation available and they had a prerequisite for the learnership which was a code 8 drivers license. They all are single mothers and they wanted employment so as to be able to provide for their children.

"It's difficult to ask for maintenance from the fathers of these children since most of them have families and some cannot afford." Thandeka

Most of them prefer to look after their children and avoid the trauma of dragging the children's' fathers to courts. One of the male drivers said that women are joining the occupation because they just want to take away their jobs.

"They know that the government and management will be soft with them... women have God gifted jobs at the house as wives and mothers why are they coming here." Tafa a male bus driver

According to the management; women are joining these male dominated occupations because of enabling legislation otherwise they would not be employing as many women as they have up to now. While it is interesting to see how many women have been

employed by the bus company as long distance bus drivers it is also surprising at what drives each and every woman to be in the male dominated occupation.

4.7 Challenges faced by the women bus drivers

This section is an outline of the specific challenges faced by the women long distance bus drivers as they try to balance their family and work life in a male dominated occupation.

4.8 Spouses as a challenge

As married women Cindy and Lolly face challenges at home with their husbands. Their husbands are always complaining about the nights away from home and the children. Cindy's husband threatened her by considering looking for a second wife who will warm his bed and make supper for him while she was away. Lollys' husband had a son younger than their last born from an extra marital affair which developed when she started driving long distance buses. For Nozy, Terry and Tapy who are in their twenties complained on how they are missing out on having fun and meeting potential husbands.

Tapy complained that "Girls my age are working normal hours and during weekends they are clubbing while I am on the road...my mother has lost hope in me finding her a son in law.

4.9 Challenge on parent children time

For the single mothers like Thato, Sindiso, Nelly and Thandeka they reported that they miss their children and that they also feel like they are missing out on a lot things happening while they are on the roads.

What was more common with all the respondents was that the management was male dominated and they did not understand their problems as women and that they all feel like they are missing out on a lot of mother children time because of their shifts.

4.10 Colleagues as a challenging factor

Some respondents who are usually paired with men on their shifts complained that the men want to do all the driving, loading and off loading while the women are given lighter duties like checking tickets and attending to passengers needs. One male driver when asked why they do this he said that it is like looking at his wife doing all the heavy lifting while he is watching. For Thato, because of her age male colleagues were refusing to be paired up on a shift with her as they all complained that she looked lazy and old hence they would be doing all the work while she was busy 'snoring' and sleeping. One of the drivers when asked why he refused to be paired up with her he confidently said,

"*What stories do I talk with her on the bus; she is old and not fun" Lungile a male bus driver.*

4.11 Challenges with passengers

With passengers most of the respondents at one time or the other had passengers refusing to be driven by women and they felt offended and reduced when they had to consult management to convince the passengers to get on the bus.

"If all passengers refuse to get on all the buses driven by women where would that leave us? Jobless!" Thandeka,

Some passengers would call the management with false information about a female driver and this may lead to pending investigations.

"One passenger almost got me fired when they complained that I was driving dangerously and I needed to be removed from the stirring wheel. If it was not for my shop steward who ordered an investigation and stood by me during the hearing, my children will be out of school." Lolly

One male passenger said this when asked how he felt about being driven by a female bus driver:

"It is like allowing my wife to be the husband in the house...women should stay at home and look after the children...if a woman needs to work she should open a spaza shop."Bob a male passenger.

About where they slept the women complained about the safety at the lodges they are booked into. They wanted them to be decent and comfortable for them to rest properly so that they can be ready for work the next shift.

"How can you sleep peacefully where you can hear people next door fighting over unpaid monies? They book accommodation for us at brothels; you can hear women and men going in and out." Cindy.

The society is still adjusting to seeing women driving buses hence some disturb them by hooting, whistling and waving when they realize it's a women bus driver. Nozy almost had an accident one day when children started running alongside the bus waving and shouting, she thought that there was something wrong with the bus and she did not realize a cow crossing the road.

"I had to swerve and almost hit a tree on the side of the road..... the people in the rural areas look at us like we are doing something wrong." Terry.

Most passengers mostly men were surprised to see women driving and they would ask each other if they were going to make it on time because women are too afraid to bend the rules and over speed. Some passengers would ask the women drivers what their husbands thought about their occupation.

"One male passenger said in my face that 'it would be a surprise if you are married...will you meet men?' I was so surprised." Thato

Women biological make up is different from men's and this means that they menstruate every month and during this time they need to refresh more times than usual, some have menstrual pains during this period hence they need to rest. Most of the respondents had difficulties during these times and they feel so uncomfortable being around passengers and they felt they had limited time to refresh.

"This is the time I wish I was not a woman you cannot concentrate properly because of the pain and the moods swings just make you want to be away from people and be in a more comfortable place." Sindiso

One of the respondents had a miscarriage and when she consulted a doctor she was told that it was because of the prolonged sitting. Therefore it can be said that as soon as a woman gets pregnant they should be removed from the wheel. One respondent who got pregnant and was made to work in the office complained that they missed out on the overtime allowance yet she was at the moment where she needed it most.

4.12 Coping in the male dominated occupation

Respondents like Thato, Sindiso, Lolly, Thandeka and Pana believe I God and they feel God gave them a different job from the other women so it meant that He was going to look after them at all costs. For Nelly she has told herself that she had a strong character hence she was going to fit in and prove to the world that women can also be better bus drivers. Cindy, Terry, Tapy, and Nozy adapted into the system by doing what their fellow men did.

"I feel that I have changed a lot in the way I talk to passengers, they no longer see me as a weakling but as a driver they approach with respect." These respondents used the phrase 'if you cannot beat hem join them' "we now talk the same stories with our male colleagues." Terry

Some of the women have leant to ignore some of the sexist remarks from either colleagues or passengers.

"You have to develop a thick skin or you will be offended every time a man makes a provoking comment. These days I have leant to talk back." Thandeka

In some of the cases the young women bus drivers found relief if they talked to the older and mature female and male drivers. They are a source of comfort when you have fought with your husband or boyfriend at home about this job.

"They will tell you that you need to be a woman for those few hours when you are at home...they will get used to missing you." Cindy

4.13 Union membership

Findings of the study revealed that only half of the participants were union members. The other five cannot be union members because they are contract workers. One of the participants who is a shop steward revealed that it was unfair for the other workers who are not union members as the lack proper representation in hearings and during collective bargaining.

"We have to conform to what the management wants or we get fired and what will I tell my children when I cannot feed them." Thato

"It is very disappointing to know that you have no say and no labour movement on your side. This is just a way for the company to save money, we have been employed for many years yet they do not want to make us permanent for us to get other benefits and union representation." Thandeka

“We cannot even strike for better working conditions with the others because of our contract...it’s us who need even better working conditions that the permanently employed yet we cannot voice our concerns or it’s bye-bye work and hello to poverty.”Tapy

The gender coordinator who is also a woman also felt for these women contract workers and blamed the Labour movement policies that cannot be flexible enough to accommodate contract workers.

“These women are suffering and they are desperate for these jobs yet they don’t get recognition from their trade unions...we have raised it in conferences and the matter is pushed aside for more pressing issues...What could be more pressing than women’s issues?” Zinzi trade unionist

4.14 Summary

Table: 4.0 Experiences of women long distance drivers

Names	Discrimination by company on basis of being a woman	Sexual harassment or sexist remarks by colleagues	Sexual harassment or sexist remarks by passengers	Restriction from being a union member.
Cindy	Your accommodation issue is solved, we talked to your male colleagues and they said it is ok. We cannot pay for different accommodation for drivers sleeping in the same town.	"I am a man, I cannot let passengers see you driving while I am sleeping or seated" "These guys treat us differently because we are women"	"Women are never on time."	
Nelly	"They should raise our salaries ...we have been doing a good job as women.	"If you pair me with her then we will get there late. Women are afraid of speed"	"Who does she think she is, can't she join the others in the kitchens if she wants to feed her family?" "Apartheid era was a difficult time because I had to put up with racist and sexist comments"	

Terry	"Only when it comes to peak time and holidays do they know that women get tired if they do a double shift they favour men when it comes to over time."	Male colleagues refused to be paired up with her. "Men will be men and fighting for equality on everything with them will never work so when it comes to showing off their masculinity during loading heavy luggage on the bus I let them."	"They think that I am immature for this job"	"I have never seen the union representatives fighting to sign up the contract workers."
Thato	"They do not want to hire us permanently because they want to save money...yet we bring a lot of cash in the company especially around holidays.	"Male colleague complained that he could not work with a woman because they are slow and they would delay the trip and that he will do all the heavy work."	"Who gave these women "isibindi" to drive these big vehicles? This world is definitely coming to an end.	I am not eligible to join a trade union. So I cannot afford to make any demands for improvement of my working conditions. Who will stand for me if I get fired?"
Lolly	"They do not accept that some of us do not wear trousers...it's against my religion...when I ask for skirts instead they give me short skirts...how will I sit now." "I stay far and they expect me here at 5am yet they do not even bother to pick us up from	"Unsupportive fellow women." "On this job you have to be careful of whom to be friends with because some can be jealousy of you and can get you fired."	One solder complained that "the woman driver is not driving properly and swerving a lot." she will get us killed"	"I still feel there are less women in our trade union because it takes years for a thing to be done, we have been waited for these uniforms since 2010...where was the union?'

	our homes."			
Tapy	"They (management) sometimes do not take us serious when you tell them that you have period pain and you are not able to concentrate properly at work because of the excruciating pain.	"On my first day I was asked out by 3 male drivers...all they think is that we come here to look for men... all I want is to feed my family"	"As a woman the passengers expect us to look clean every time and when you do not, they give you that look." "The bus was so dirty...I was surprised it was being driven by a women...Women should be smart."	
Nozy	"The management is all male so it is a problem to air your concerns because they do not understand."	"They are inviting trouble unto themselves…when they get raped they should not complain"	"I hope we get home before Christmas...with these women we will be moving at 80km per hour."	
Sindiso	"It's because of these rights that women have nowadays, and the Government has to force us to adhere to them. They now want to be everywhere were men used to work."	"I like being paired with a women at least I have someone to warm my blankets tonight."	""Women should like being equal to men in everything yet they are not strong. Look at her she cannot even carry the heavy bags on her own."	
Pana	This is just a way for the company to save money, we have been employed for many years yet they do not want to make us permanent for us to get other benefits	"These women are not as strong as us. Will they be able to change a flat tire on a bus as big as it is."	"He was just being a man, he whispered to me that even though I can drive and load on and off luggage on to the bus like a man I am still a woman and he could over power me...I cried like a baby until other passengers came to my rescue." ... These passengers make you a person different from who you were when you joined the	"It is very disappointing to know that you have no say and no labour movement on your side"

			profession."	
Thandeka	"If it was not for the Employment equity act this management would have never hired us. They say women have more problems than men"	"Who invited these girls to join us, this government is now losing it on rights for women. who will cook at home now if we all have to drive buses	How does a women explain not sleeping at home and cooking for her family?...these women should join occupations that are done during the day not over night...who will protect her if she is harassed on the bus?"	

It was evident that with all the participation of women that they have diverse experiences, challenges, coping strategies and reasons why they joined long distance bus driving as an occupation. Therefore it is not possible to conclude that women long distance bus drivers have the same challenges and experiences as each other but they have a common ground in their femininity and their nurturing side as care givers and as mothers. The women maybe strong on the job and to the society but deep inside they are females and have those traits in the way they relate to their work.

From the findings in this chapter it can also be said that based on the differences in experiences, challenges and coping strategies of the ten women, it can be concluded that they have a common ground on their children's well being. When analyzing how some of the women have adapted into the male dominated occupation it can be concluded that some have had more positive experiences than others.

Patriarchal influences have also hindered the active participation of more women in long distance bus driving. This study found out those women who have joined occupations traditionally male dominated are still fighting sexism and prejudice which has manifested in their day to day interaction with male colleagues and passengers. Three quarters of the participants were either single or divorced and some of the divorced blamed the occupation amongst other things to be one of the contributing factors. As was mentioned in chapter one it is still evident that the participation of women in the labour market is determined by factors such as their marital status, reproductive rights and the widely prevailing expectations that women have primary responsibility for family care. Therefore one can say that as long as the society has negative perceptions about women's participation in waged labour it boils down to further discrimination by managers and men in the labour market since they all come from the same society where women are treated as second class citizens.

Women are discouraged from participating in previously dominated occupations by the societal beliefs of how they should handle themselves as women from Table 4.0 passengers had negative thoughts and behaviour they exhibited towards the women who they regarded as deviants. South Africa as mentioned in chapter one is still a patriarchal society where women have prescribed roles in the society and working in men's jobs is not one of them because it is considered to be deviant behaviour. This results in the resistance by male colleague through their display of sexism and prejudice against these women. With reference to Table 4.0, one male colleague blamed the women bus drivers for bringing rape upon themselves because they have exposed themselves to an occupation where there is less protection. This poses a big challenge

on how they perform their duties at work and how they display their abilities if their fellow colleagues do not support and protect them against perverts.

This Chapter also found out that the attitudes and culture of bus driving is male in that the machinery and activities involved are more male friendly than female friendly, some of the old buses still being used have big stirring wheels and unadjustable seats which are customarily made for a male body structure. Women have bust and the big stirring disturbs their ability to drive properly. Most women are shorter than men hence they need to put blankets on the seat for them to reach the stirring wheel. Some of the women have to wear a slack which is against their religion so as to protect themselves from being seen when getting onto the bus, bending over to reach for luggage and when going over the engine box which is near the steering wheel. During training all drivers are taught using manual buses which are old and require the driver to use the driver's door and the steps to reach the door are high especially for most of the women employed at the company.

Findings revealed that only five of the participants were contract workers hence they did not have union representation. This makes them vulnerable to abuse by management since they do not have any representation from any labour movement. They have to conform to the rules and regulations of the management no matter how unfair it would be to them. These participants do not get uniforms from the company and this makes them vulnerable to abuse by passengers. They are only recognizable when they are behind the stirring wheel. According to some participants they felt that not

being given uniforms which would associate them with the company made them feel unimportant yet they are suppose to represent the company to the passengers.

Labour movements are failing to organise the contract workers as they say that they do not fit the criteria of being a union members. This has shown that labour movements are failing to amend their constitutions in order to consider contract workers or casual labour as members who also need the same benefits and representation as fully employed workers.

Theron, (2005:296) used the term ‘casualisation’ to denote the new forms of work that came in the wake of embracing of labour market flexibility. Clarke, (2004:559) added the concept of ‘independent contraction’ that has similar implications with Theron’s idea. Theron, (2005) argues that by casualisation, work forms had diverted from the standard employment relationship that was characterised by full time and continuous employment. The work place and the employer were distinguishable. With the embrace of neo-liberalism, workers are caught in a triangular relationship where it’s difficult to identify the employer and the workplace.

Buhlungu and Webster, (2006), added that the shrinking of the core and extension of non-core and peripheral workers has fractured labour solidarity and weakened trade unions which are the primary vehicles for improving workplace, protecting worker’s rights and integrating workers into the society, since workers in the non-core do not fall under the category of workers who can be protected by unions. The Trade Unions gender departments have started programmes to change the mindset of employers and male colleagues on how to accommodate women entering the traditionally male

dominated occupations but not all employers and employees attend because some are not union represented members.

For the other respondents who are union members complain that because of the nature of their work some meetings are held while they are on their shifts and no-one bothers to give them a recap when they come back. They do not know if their problems would have been mentioned in the meetings at all since most of the shop stewards are male. Female shop stewards are blamed for not being as aggressive as men in the meetings hence; female problems are not addressed properly.

Table: 4.1 Positive remarks on women as long distance bus drivers

Names	Management	Colleagues	Passengers	Trade unions
Cindy	"The management has been so good to us...at least we get complimentary tickets for us and our families to travel."	"They really help out with the driving if they notice that you are not feeling well"	"It's mostly men who thank us when we get to our final destinations."	"They have stood by me in so many cases."
Nelly	"At least they gave me a chance long before the learnership programme...I even got promoted to another male dominated department."	"These men respect me because I have been in this company long before most of them."	"Some of the white passengers gave me tips and would confess that they were not sure they would arrive alive and on time."	"This union has been on my side for a long time now and I really thank them"
Terry	"I am so thankful to them for the women's learnership programme."	"They feel pity for me because of my age... so they try to hook me up with their children so that I have a social life and I show their children that nothing is	"I can feel them admiring the way I drive because they will be murmuring amongst themselves."	"They represent us when it comes to cases like the provision of uniforms and some unfair employment

		impossible in life."		practices."
Thato	"They organize food at every service station we stop for breaks."	"Some of them don't have problems with sharing a shift with me because they know that I work hard."	"They have respect for me since I look old and they address me with respect when they want to be dropped off where we are not supposed to drop them."	
Lolly	"They actually listened to my story when a passenger lied that I was not driving properly...anywhere else I would have been put on suspension."	"They now respect that I am a married woman and they don't say their foul language at me."	"I admire women who look after themselves and go against all odds to prove the society that what men can do women can do."	"There is safety in joining a trade union...there is someone fighting for my rights out there."
Tapy	"The world cup made them hire us."	"Some of the old drivers really advise us and they encourage us to be shining examples of the feature generation...they always say that we will make history"	"I am so pleased now I will start buying my daughters macho toys instead of dolls...I want them to have a choice in life like these women had."	
Nozy	"When they hired me they had faith in me because the trainer was so patient and confidence that I was going to be a good driver besides being short and young"	"Women drivers are more cautious and there has never been one involved in an accident since I started working with them."	"Women are even better drivers than some of the man I have travelled with...they are even well behaved because they stick to the rules, they charge fairly for the luggage."	
Sindiso	"At least they did not fire me when I got pregnant with my second child...they cared enough to make me work in the offices so that I would not miscarry."	I can safely sleep and snore when she is driving because I now know her and her driving"	"It is rare to be thanked by old aged passengers but they do most of the time and they do not even hide their excitement when we get them to their final destinations."	"The trade union has 74organized to meet with all the women drivers in the industry and during the meeting we felt they

				knew we existed."
Pana	"They teach us survival strategies before they plunge us into a bus full of passengers...they even know that there are problematic passengers out there so they investigate complains before calling you for a hearing."	"I admire these women for they know why they come to work and unlike some male drivers who look for concubines in every town, these women rest and watch television."	"Some passengers are so pleased that they want to hire us to drive at their special occasions just to show us off in their villages." "If I were to hire women to drive my buses I won't worry about accident they are so cautions that you do not even realize you are where you are suppose to be on the scheduled time."	
Thandeka	"they recognize women as shop stewards...I thought they were going to refuse my appointment"	"They are very supportive when we have problems with passengers especially man." I think they see us as their sisters although they pretend to hate us at work."	"You should come and show my daughter how tough women can be...she lacks confidence in herself and she thinks I lie when I tell her that there are women long distance bus drivers."	"The union has done us good and they are In consultations to find out ways of recruiting the contract workers."

From table 4.1, the respondents have shown that their working environment is not only made up of management, workmates, union personnel and passengers with negative attitudes and approaches that are bent on criticizing and frustrating women. Various instances have been shown where the management, members of the public as well as workmates are slowly accepting women as equal partners in the transport sector. The researcher believes that if the various parties are afforded education about the rights and abilities of women, this positive attitude will continue to develop.

CHAPTER FIVE: IS THERE UNJUST DIVISION OF LABOUR?

5.1 Introduction

While the last chapter focused on the presentation, analysis and interpretation of data, this chapter examines why women are reluctant to join traditionally male dominated occupations. It also explores some of the challenges they experience in these male dominated workplaces and how they have managed to adapt.

5.2 Women's working lives

The beginning of the 20th century has seen women joining the labour force in very large numbers and this has been due to a number of push and pull factors in the labour market as indicated in chapter one of this research. However, these women have been concentrated in what Konek and Kitch (1994:4) describe as "women's work" and these are usually amongst the lowest paid and less skilled. Yeandle (1984:3) argues that "the confinement to trade and occupations both deny women access to male rates of pay and play a significant part in the reinforcing gender roles and in restricting women's expectations and ambitions." Bergman (1986) analysed occupational segregation by ranking 335 occupations that employed 25,000 or more in 1984 by the percentage of women they employ. She also found that 49, 87% of women were in the top 54 occupations and employed only 3.94% of men. The lowest ranking occupations which employed 49.41% of men only employed 4.76% of women (Konek and Kitch1994). The

findings by Bergman indicate that women are densely populated in certain types of occupations and are reluctant to job others which are male dominated.

Women maybe densely populated in some professions compared to male dominated ones due to socialization; if the society differentiates what boys and what girls should and should not do. This will then be instilled in their minds and this affects the way they choose their career paths. This is supported by Konek and Kitch (1994:4) who argue that “children learn at a very early age that certain jobs are identified with either women or men.” Therefore they do not even make an effort to join the occupations as this may be deemed by society as deviant behaviour. However, with globalization young women are opting to join professions and careers that used to be previously male dominated because of the attractive wages offered.

Another reason why women are concentrated in very few occupations is the crowding out hypothesis (Konek and Kitch 1994). This is when women ‘crowd’ a small number of occupations because there are more women in those occupations as compared to men. This increases the supply of labour and lowers the wages hence the idea that most female dominated occupations are lowly paid as compared to the male dominated occupations.

Konek and Kitch (1994) and Walby (1988), argued that occupational segregation remains a significant feature of the female labour force. Reskin and Roos (1990) observed that “in 1989, 95 % of all secretaries, stenographers and typists still were women.” They further noted that the 70’s and 80’s were known by a reduction in the level of segregation since it marked an increase in female physicians from 7% to 14,6%

of all physicians between 1967 and 1985. Female engineers increased from 1, 2% in 1950 to 7.9% in 1989 and female lawyers and judges increased from 4,1% in 1950 to 19% in 1989 (Konek and Kitch 1994).

Rix and Stone (1984) in Konek and Kitch (1994) argue that women are less in male dominated occupations because they join them in their young age expecting to get married some day and with time they meet family responsibilities so instead of pursuing their careers they tend to resign and look after their families. Hence, management does not expect women to achieve success because of this women's pattern and this limits the opportunities for those who do not want to have families.

5.3 Women at the fringe of the South African labour market

In the 1960's women accounted for 23 % of the labour force in South Africa, by 1985 this had risen to 36 % and by 1991 it had reached 41% (Standing et al, 1996: 60). Female labour supply has also increased in the 1990s in South Africa as a whole. Female labour force participation rates has risen based on data from the 1991 and 1996 Census and the 1995, 1996 and 1997 October Household Surveys (OHSs). The trend observed over the second half of the 1990s represents the continuation of an already established phenomenon that there is an increase of women in the labour market (Casale and Posel 2001).

According to the 2008 Businesswomen's Association report, women make up 51% of South Africa's total population aged between 15 and 65; however, only 43% of the employed population is female. South Africa's long running problem of structural

unemployment has mostly affected African women in particular. While there are no current composite statistics showing unemployment by race and gender, official data published two years ago indicated that by September 2007, the rate of unemployment among black African women was 31%, while for those classified as Coloureds, Indians and Whites, it was respectively 21%, 11%, and 4.5%. This means that for every one white woman without a job in South Africa, there were at least seven unemployed black African women.

Lack of employment opportunities and the absence of an independent source of income means that many women are forced to rely on their spouses, immediate family members, relatives or friends for survival. Furthermore, the country's social security system offers no form of income support to indigent people between the age of 17 and 60 years unless, that is, they have a disability.

Unfortunately there is less or no data on women in South Africa who have joined the previously dominated occupations. However, there has been work on students who have chosen previously male dominated subjects in tertiary education but this is not a guarantee that they would join the previously macho occupations because of the other reasons mentioned above about what happens to women at a marriage stage in life.

TABLE 5.0 Highest level of education of employed and unemployed (narrow definition),

By gender, and economically active and not active, South Africa, 2009 (aged 15-64, April-June)

		Economically active				**Economically not active**
	Total	**Male**		**Female**		
		employed	**unemployed**	**employed**	**unemployed**	
No schooling	3.3	3.4	2.4	3.9	2.1	6.7
Less than primary completed	9.4	10.0	11.5	8.7	7.0	14.1
Primary completed	5.2	5.5	5.6	4.9	4.2	7.9
Secondary not completed	36.1	34.5	45.0	31.9	45.4	52.6
Secondary completed	29.8	28.9	30.7	29.1	34.3	15.5
Tertiary	15.3	16.6	4.2	20.8	6.1	2.5
Other	0.9	1.1	0.6	0.7	0.9	0.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
*1000	17,494	7,397	2,060	5,973	2,065	13,585

Statistics South Africa 2009b on Labour Force Survey data

Other = 'don't' know', unspecified

The table above shows that tertiary educated African women in employment was less than half that of such educated employed women from the other three population

groups; African educated men was even one-third of their male share in the other groups.

However there is a higher educational level on average attained by African women compared to African men. By 2005 this was the case among the employed as well as the unemployed. While 14% of the employed African women had attained tertiary education, 9.5% of the employed African men had. On the other hand, a considerable share of employed African women without any schooling remained (9%, against 7% males). The shares of tertiary educated among all unemployed African women and men were less than 3% for both, another indication that in the 2000s attaining tertiary education enlarged job opportunities for Blacks considerably. Again, non-completion of secondary education works the other way around; in 2005 this was about equally so for blacks and for the other population groups (Van Klaveren et al 2000).

5.4 Is the South African labour market still discriminating against women?

South African labour market still discriminates against women indirectly in those lower levels of pay in the employment sectors, mainly employ women. Women traditionally work in welfare, such teaching, and nursing, social work and secretarial. Such jobs are less well paid than work in production of goods, engineering, sciences and financial services. There is no justification for this discrimination, as it is not based on the difficulty of the work or its level of responsibility. This means that female job seekers should also take up jobs in these occupations. However, too low a value is placed on characteristics associated with female dominated occupations these are nimble fingers, social skills, concentration physical and emotional care. At the same time the

characteristics associated with traditionally male jobs are leadership, technical insight, heavy physical work are over-valued. These subconscious valuations come up as a result of socialization; hence, men think that they are providers so they should earn more while women think that they are helpers so they deserve less.

Jobs in sectors where both men and women do the same kind of work are valued differently. There is no justifiable reason for the difference in pay. An example is the difference between male and female lectures at the same tertiary institution (Vuvuzela 2011). This according to the Employment equity act (1998 section 2) is unlawful. Hartman (2010) argues that “South Africa has sophisticated machinery present in public life, and it has come to present the social and political transformation.” However, this may be true on paper but not practiced on the ground. Women may have entered into previously male spaces but they are still faced with challenges such as sexual harassment, gender violence and even murder (Sunday Times 2010).

5.6 Combining work and family

Findings of this research indicated that some participants are married some are divorced, some are single but one thing familiar with all of them is that they have children. Their employment decisions are often based on the availability of child care, from the respondents the day care they chose was from relatives or friends. Deaux and Ullman (1983) noted that 90% of wage earning mothers preferred leaving their children with relatives or siblings.

“I prefer leaving my kids with my mother because I know I will not give them enough attention” Thato

“The daycare centres are very expensive and accidents may happen there...they do not take as much care as my sister would with my kids” Pana

“My relatives are more caring than these day care centers at least I give her shelter and food in return for her services” Terry

The participants have had different experiences and they have adopted survival strategies on how to deal with the conflicting roles they have to perform. With the married women Deaux and Ullman (1983) argue that women tend to choose a pattern in which she marries until she is married then leaves work only to return when the children are older. This was the situation with Thato who is now a grandmother; she left her native country and worked in a clothing factory until she got married. When her husband died she resumed work got a code 14 drivers license and started work.

“When my husband died I had to go back to work because there was no other source of income.” Thato

After I had my children I thought it was high time I went back to work...being at home was driving me insane...all day in the house watching television and sitting on my drivers’ license. Lolly

However, with the other married women like Cindy and Thato they are expected by tradition to perform household chores when they are not at their places of work, this

confirmed by Deaux and Ullman (1983:26) who argue that “housework is defined as the woman’s responsibility, whether she is full time home maker or not.”

In other investigations done by Bahr in 1974 on dual career couples, it has been noted that the employed woman has greater power in the family decisions than do full- time house makers (Bahr 1974 in Deaux and Ullman 1983:27). However, these findings in the patriarchal society like South African might only be relevant to the white community and not in the Afrikaner and the black community. In these cultures men are the decision makers and they are the head of the household. From the interviews with the married respondents; they complained that they are even told how to use their salaries.

“My husband wants me to spend my salary on petty things like groceries and perishable goods while he buys furnisher and pays for the house bond.”Cindy

Cindy only realized that her husband did not want her contribute in a noticeable manner because he would feel emasculated. The single, divorced or widowed respondents only had their children to deal with and those with kids who are grown up and out of school worry less than the ones who have little kids.

“I am worried that my baby will not recognize me one day because when I get home from a shift she will be sleeping and when I wake up in the morning she would have been taken to the day care facility...I rarely see her.” Terry

“It breaks my heart to see them crying every time I have to leave for work, It’s not a good sight but I hope they will understand when they grow up that I was doing it for them.” Tapy

5.7 Sexual harassment

The study found that the society in South Africa is still patriarchal and this mentality has led women bus drivers to experience sexual harassment from both passengers and their colleagues. Deaux and Ullman (1983:28) define sexual harassment as deliberate or repeated unsolicited verbal comments, gestures, or physical contact of a sexual nature that is considered to be unwelcome by the recipient." Both victim and the harasser can be either a woman or a man, and the victim and harasser can be the same sex.

During interviews and observations during trips the researcher gathered that some male passengers and colleagues showed no respect for women bus drivers because of their gender. When it came to being paired up for shifts some male drivers would refuse to be paired up with women.

"The male drivers would tell the line managers that they did not want to be paired up with me because I was a woman and I would slow him down because we are naturally slow." Terry

"Women are too obedient to company speed regulations...if its 100km/hr they will never go beyond that I cannot work like that." Rudy a male driver

"I do not want to be paired up with her... she is old what stories will we be talking about?" Drew a male driver

"Back in the day I did not want to be paired up with a woman on my trips...they easily get tired and I had to drive and load the luggage." Happy a former male driver

“When they pair me up with a woman then I knew I was going to do a double shift because I cannot let people see me sleeping while she is driving.” Roy a former driver

Due to the continues sexual harassment the women drivers receive on a daily basis some of the respondents like Tapy, Thandeka, Nelly and Nozy have gotten so cautions and have resorted in carrying broomsticks on the bus so as to beat up a man if they behaved in a sexually offensive manner.

“I know I am not as strong as they are but I will die trying...i will not let a man touch me like I am their wife.” Thandeka

Gutek and Nakamura (1982) in Deaux and Ullman (1983:29) claim that “For individual women, sexual harassment may impede progress, lower self confidence, and reduce career commitment.”

“They are inviting trouble unto themselves…when they get raped they should not complain.” Ken a male passenger

It is comments like these that make some of the women lose confidence and love for their jobs.

“When I joined this occupation I wanted to be a role model for all the young women out there that women can also drive but because of some sexist remarks we get I don’t want my daughter to follow in my footsteps.”Lolly

During trips male passengers would purposely delay coming back to the bus knowing that the women bus drivers would never leave them behind.

“How can she even leave me behind when she is still waiting for her free meal; these women bus drivers eat too much...every minute they are munching on something.” T.K a passenger

On one of the trips an elderly man refused to ride on the bus because it was being driven by a woman. This still reflects that some elderly men still have that mentality that women can never be in charge because of the hierarchical relation between men and women in which men dominate and women are subordinate and this has been instilled in their heads for a long period of time.

“Where are the men...I cannot be driven by a women I have never let my wife drive me in the car why would I let this child take me as far as Durban.” Roy a male passenger

On the other hand some of the male colleagues would sexually harass women and the women would be sexually harassed without knowledge on both parties. During trips the researcher observed that some of the female drivers would be hugged and smooched by fellow colleagues when they met at service stations.” When the researcher asked some of the respondents why they allowed men to do that to them they dismissed it and blamed it on the male nature.

“That’s how he is...every time we meet he hugs me and I have to push him away sometimes when it gets uncomfortable.” Thandeka

Because of ignorance one male bus driver was reported for sexual harassment.

“I was surprised one time when I was called for disciplinary hearing for sexual harassment...I thought we were playing as usual...i did not know I could be fired for such a thing.” Bothy a male bus driver

The definition of Sexual harassment has been varied from time to time because of the continuous debates over the true meaning of it (Deaux and Ullman 1983). However SATAWU as a union has embarked on a campaign to teach women and men on what sexual harassment is and how to avoid it.

“It is so confusing and we have had so many cases where offenders have reported that they did not know it was wrong...we are going in companies to teach them so as to avoid it.” Zinzi

5.8 Coping strategies for women in macho occupations

Mainiero (1986) outlines some mechanisms workers can use so as to cope with their workload and work environment. The first step is to use the socialisation perspective. This perspective retains the notion of men dominating women. Individuals can gain power by acting aggressively and assertively to access resources, information and support. In this regard, Mainiero (1986) argues that women should adopt some coping strategies and if they do not, it might only aid by perpetuating their powerlessness.

Traditionally, male occupations have a resemblance of male culture and this may make women feel discriminated against hence they have to act in a particular way in order to fit into this culture. Benya (2009) has illustrated how women in the mining sector have devised several coping mechanisms to adapt to life underground such as exchanging

sexual favours for help or learning the fanakalo, a language used by miners to communicate. In the transport sector the respondents in the findings reported that they have adapted to the male dominated occupation by adopting a rougher and an “I don’t care” attitude. Hartman (2010) asserted that women who seek employment in the traditional male occupations like mining, transport and the army do this in order to support their families. As a result, they have to do all they can to adapt and feed their families.

“It’s a dog eat dog in this occupation you either adopt or you get frustrated and leave.”Nelly

“The salaries are so low and the working conditions are so bad sometimes that all you want to do is leave…but you have to make do with what you have...during holidays you do double shifts and forget that you have a home and kids to go to.”Tapy

In bus driving, there is masculine culture that favours men and excludes women. Male bus drivers are seen to be tough and capable of dealing with problematic passengers, while at the same time they have a common language when they deal with police officials on the road. Society perceives women as soft, honest, and truthful, therefore corrupt officials may find it difficult to ask for bribes from women drivers. Male bus drivers have their own strategies of copying with long working hours, difficult passengers and other problems associated with driving which might not be applicable to female drivers.

“After a long drive with problematic passengers and police officials on the roads I get myself a girlfriend from the town I will be sleeping and ‘whoosh’ my stress is gone in the morning.” Joseph a male bus driver

“Most of the hostesses I move around with are more than willing to sleep with me when we get to our destination; this makes me feel so relaxed and happy the next morning.” Todd a male bus driver

From the above statements it can be concluded that male drivers have sex as a way of relieving their stressful working hours. From the observations on the trips the researcher realized that when the women bus drivers got to their final destination all they wanted to do was rest, call their families and inform their partners that they were safe. This proves that women are caring human beings which find comfort in those close to them.

“When I get to the hotel I do not sleep without knowing if my kids and my partner are alright and what they have had for supper.” Nelly

“I sometimes call just to hear the voice of my baby…it keeps me going and reminds me why I am doing this job.”Thandeka

However, this was different from the male bus drivers; when they got to their final destination they left their bags in their rooms and would go out and hang out with the boys and then they would come back at odd hours. For those who were having affairs with hostesses they would take them out, buy food and come back to their rooms to sleep.

“I feel pity for these young girls (hostesses) who are sleeping with these married bus drivers. Do they know who else they are sleeping with when they are on other routes and shifts? Are we ever going to have an HIV free generation?” Thato

Thato felt sorry for these hostesses and wished she could tell them to do something about themselves besides sleeping with the drivers.

Women bus drivers have to dress up like men this has been explained by Humphrey (1987) who argues that sometimes women cope by adopting “male style” mechanisms as mitigatory strategy to survive in a macho environment.

“I grew up in the rural areas not wearing trousers and when I came to Johannesburg I did not feel comfortable wearing them but when I joined this occupation I had to wear them because of the nature of the job. How will I climb the steps to get to the driver’s seat or bend and reach out to the luggage with people behind me? I do not want to attract unnecessary attention to myself.” Pana

“My religion does not allow me to wear trousers but I had to go and ask the pastor and explain to him why I really needed to wear them I just don’t want anyone from my church to see me at work.” Sindiso

Women also become hostile and rough, thereby subscribing to the notions that if you can’t beat them; join them, a strategy that women employ so as to fit into the male dominated work environment.

“If you do not speak their rough and foul language they will make your life miserable and embarrass you all the time.” Cindy

“These male drivers have their language that is foul and if you stay around them for too long you will be speaking that language and they start regarding you as one of them.” Nelly

Some women according to Humphrey (1987) join trade unions and make it their ground to air their grievances as a way of coping with situations at their workplaces.

“I am a member of a trade union and I feel safe because I have representation during collective bargaining.” Lolly

“because I am not a member of a union we have to conform to what the management wants or we get fired and what will I tell my children when I cannot feed them” Nana.

“It is very disappointing to know that you have no say and no labour movement on your side. This is just a way for the company to save money, we have been employed for many years yet they do not want to make us permanent for us to get other benefits and union representation.” Thandeka

“We cannot even strike for better working conditions with the others because of our contract...it’s us who need even better working conditions that the permanently employed yet we cannot voice our concerns or it’s bye-bye work and hello to poverty.”Tapy

Tapy, Thandeka and Nana have hope in the trade union representation and without it they know that they are at risk of being mistreated by their employers.

"Some of these women joined the trade union movement because they want representation during wage and work related disputes but when we call for meetings and demonstrations they give excuses…How can the union help them if they do not come for meetings." Eddy male shop steward

5.9 Is joining a Trade union a safety net?

"For most of the twentieth century, black women were far more likely to be in the waged labor force than their white counterparts. Most were confined to domestic work and other poorly paid, marginal jobs. The obstacles to union organizing were enormous, particularly in domestic work, where employment was highly unstable and decentralized... most unions took little interest in the plight of black women, who were subject to both race and sex prejudice within the labour movement as well as in society"(Terborg-Penn1986).

What Terborg- Penn wrote is what most South African women are facing up to today. From the research half of the respondents interviewed did not belong to any union because they did not fit the criteria of being members since they are not fully employed. This has shown a weakness in the South African labour movement because they cannot organise contract workers leaving them at the mercy of employers who are likely to abuse them because they lack representation. These women thought that the trade union movement was letting them down since they could not organise them.

"Our trade union should do something about this contract work business…these employers are taking us for a ride." Nozy

"Why can't they just let us join them we can afford to pay the subscriptions?" Pana

Women in the transport sector are worried "the impact of the global economic crisis, liberalisation, restructuring, outsourcing and privatization on women, and the importance of organising women, women's and equality education, tackling occupational gender segregation and ensuring fair representation and transparent procedures for union elections. The most urgent ones included maternity, family, childcare and flexible working rights under threat, action taken on sexual harassment and violence against women, inappropriate uniforms, low pay, HIV/AIDS, unfair retirement age for women" (Women Transport Workers' Conference report 2010:1).

"Most of the grievances which we brought up at the 2010 ITF conference are not yet discussed by the union yet we are now in 2011." Zinzi

However, SATAWU the biggest transport representative union in South Africa claims it is in the process of accomplishing some of the women's grievances.

"They will not address these challenges because the union upper structure is dominated by men." Thandeka

"This industry is so male dominated and some of the women's issues are swept under the carpet before conferences. Women are few in the executive body that we are over powered by the men...we have suggested there be a women leadership school where women will be educated on issues that affect women's progress in unions."Zinzi

Patriarchal relations in the home, the workplace and the union restrict any significant changes in women's access to union power. Rees (1992) argues that women need to

be in the hierarchy of trade unions because without their involvement, it is unlikely to address issues which would radically improve women's working lives. The researcher therefore found out that some unions do not negotiate on women's issues because of the patriarchal society in which they operate in; they do not want to be blamed for supporting the empowerment of women instead of challenging it (Rees 1992).

5.10 Summary

In this chapter it has been shown that some women are comfortable in joining some occupations instead of the others without knowing the disadvantages of doing so. It also discusses how the women in traditional male occupations are balancing their work and family lives in a culture that is still discriminating against women in the workplace. Trade Unions have been noticed to be representing workers grievances by some of the respondents but they have been blamed for supporting the patriarchal culture of excluding women's views. Rees (1992) argues that the power relations between men and women at home and in the society are reproduced in the unions. Hence the exclusion of women in the decision making processes... "women are restricted in their freedom to challenge those power structures in work, through the union by those self-same power structures in the home" (Rees1992:105)

There is need to educate men on what is sexual harassment and how they can treat women as human beings and not as objects this has been demonstrated by SATAWU in their campaign against sexual abuse since 2006. The SATAWU gender report 2006 to 2011 suggested there be a women leadership school which will aim at introducing gender division of labour, patriarchy/matriarchy, gender exploitation, sex and gender

differences and the inclusion of women in all spheres of the workplace. However, some members in the society still believe that women's place is in the home and not in the workplace especially the traditionally male dominated occupations.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

This study has shown some of the challenges women meet in traditionally male dominated occupations with specific reference to long distance bus driving. It also looked at what has motivated some women and what has discouraged some in joining occupations that are male dominated. For the ones who have joined these occupations the study shows some of the coping strategies they are using to adopt.

6.2 Discussion of the findings

The findings further suggest that patriarchy in the society has also influenced the entrance of women into the labour market worse still previously male dominated occupations. Hartman (1979) argues that the role of patriarchal social relations interacting with capitalist economic structures play a crucial role in perpetuating occupational segregation by sex. In the African culture, from a tender age, the socialisation process differentiates the girl child from the boy child. Males are socialised to view themselves as breadwinners and heads of households whilst females are taught to be obedient and submissive mothers and wives. The cause of such differentiation and discrimination is the fact that society views women as sexual beings and not as human beings. Women are not only constantly defined in relation to men, but are defined as dependent and subordinate to them as well. As a result, women are socialized to be gentle, passive and submissive. This fits them into a relationship of dependence on men (Kambarami 2006).

Chaka (2006) argues that men in their male-bonding discriminate on women. In the findings it is revealed that male passengers and colleagues sexually harassed women verbally and physically and this they did as a way of showing their superiority over the other sex. This behaviour can leave women feeling invisible and unrecognized and this discourages them from raising issues and airing their views in the fear that their contribution will not have any effect (Chaka 2006). The 'Macho' culture and machinery used in the male dominated occupations has forced some of the women to accept the status quo as a way of coping with the occupation.

The management has adhered to set legislature by accommodating women into the male dominated occupations, but it also seems that they ignore women's needs especially the issue with accommodation, duty allocation and permanently employing the workers on contract. This may be due to the dominance of man in the management and this may influence their decision making especially when it comes to women.

Findings have also shown that there is minimum participation by trade unions in the support for women in previously male dominated occupations. Clawson (2003) argues that unions are described around masculinity, the same way solidarity is linked to gender and race. Therefore this discourages women to work and for those who are working from joining trade unions as they feel that they are gender biased and it will be a waste of time. Half of the respondents in the research had no representation because their work status does not qualify them to be members. ITF in 2010 reported that they are aware of the nearly 100 000 women road transport workers around the world who are members of unions affiliated to them yet there are still more women who are

suppose to be organised into the trade union movement but they are not. The contract workers fit into these categories (ITF 2010). Men in the trade union movement should be educated to take gender issues seriously as this promotes union democracy.

Enabling legislation has been put in place to accommodate women into the labour market but the findings showed that more women still feel comfortable in joining occupations that are female dominated in comparison to the male dominated ones. Unfortunately there has been a minimum follow up of how these legislatures are implemented since women are still faced with challenges as they try to penetrate into the labour market and more especially male dominated occupations. Government and policy makers are therefore encouraged to take all necessary measures to empower women, strengthen their economic independence and promote women's participation in all decision making positions (Mkunu 2005).

The mindset of the society towards gender segregation of labour has to be addressed so as to have a progressing society where jobs are allocated by ability and not by gender. Men need to accept women as partners in all spheres of life, from home to the workplace. Furthermore, the work environment and equipment used in the job should be user friendly to the female biological make up. Hartmann (1976) argues that Occupational segregation by sex cannot be eliminated unless socially imposed gender differences which encourage sexual division of labour itself are eradicated.

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Appendix

In depth Interview Schedule for long distance women bus drivers

Research introduction

I am interested in learning about challenges you have encountered at work and how you have handled them at the same time I am also interested in learning about how you cope in a male dominated occupation.

Themes to be addressed

What is the respondent's name, date of birth and marital status?

The researcher will ask about their:

Work (typical activities and responsibilities, interaction with passengers, other drivers, police officials, immigration officers what kind of responses do you need from these people?)

-income

-Work Schedule

-What motivated you to become a long distance bus driver?

- Possible favours that happen,

-Health issues

General challenges associated with long distance bus driving particularly for women

- What challenges do you normally face during work?

-Interactions between you, passengers and male bus drivers, supervisors and management

-what actions do you take when you were confronted with a problem?

- What would you describe as the dominant action you took to deal with the problem?

-what options existed in this situation? What reasons did you have for not pursuing these other options?

-Is your union active in addressing some of the problems you face at work?

Interviews

To protect all the interviewees the researcher used pseudonyms throughout the text. Below is a list of interviews conducted over the two and a half months (August-October 2011) at Autopax Bus Company depots and on the drivers' bus routes in South Africa. Some of the interviews were formal while some where informal (with passengers).

Administrators Interviewed: 1 Interview 05 August 2011, 2 Interviews 10 August 2011

Operations managers interviewed: 8 August 2011, 3 September 2011, 2 Interviews 11 September 2011.

HR Personnel: 2 Interviews 16 and 17 September 2011.

Union representatives Interviewed: 3 Interviews 15, 16 September, and 04 October 2011

Shop stewards interviewed: 4 Interviews 19, 21 September 2011, 13, 15 October 2011

Passengers interviewed: Interviews were conducted between 21August and 19 October 2011

Male bus drivers: 4 interviews were conducted between 21 August and 19 October 2011.

Women bus drivers: 10 Interviews were conducted between 21 August and 19 October 2011

University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

Private Bag X 3,

Johannesburg, 2050

03 July 2011

The Human Resource Officer

AUTOPAX Passenger Services (PTY) Limited

PO Box 1907

Pretoria

South Africa

Dear Sir/Madam

REF: APPLICATION FOR ACCESS TO RESEARCH AT YOUR COMPANY

My name is Vivian Chuchu a student at the above mentioned university faculty of humanities. I am seeking permission to do a research at your company from the 15th of July 2011 to the 15th of December 2011. The research is on women who are employed in previously male dominated occupations with specific reference to long distance bus driving.

The research will involve interviews with female and male long distance bus drivers and some of your personnel. I also intend to observe the drivers as they carry out their day to day duties. I promise to be as discreet as possible and not to interfere with the duties of your employees.

The company's' name will remain anonymous and a pseudo name will be used in the final report which will be available on request and in the library at the University of The Witwatersrand.

With regards

Vivian Chuchu

In depth interview for the secretary of gender at SATAWU.

Themes to be addressed

What is the respondents name, age, marital status, their employment history and educational credentials.

The researcher will ask:

- What is it that your job description.
- What are some of the problems faced by women in traditionally male dominated sectors like transport
- What have you done as the gender sector of SATAWU done to solve some of these problems
- How are the women settling in previously male dominated occupations
- Do you hold workshops with these women so as to address some of the challenges that they might be facing
- Since the inception of the employment equity act in 1998 and the affirmative act, do you think according to your records justice has been done to the inclusion of women in previously male dominated occupations?
- Do you make a follow up on some of the companies to establish the quarter system
- Do you think women are knowledgeable of these acts? if not what have you done to conscientise them of these.
- What have you done as a gender sector to promote the inclusion of women in the previously male dominated occupations
- What some of the challenges you have faced in trying to make women aware of their rights.

Interview Consent form

University of the Witwatersrand,
Johannesburg
Private Bag X 3,
Johannesburg
2050

I _____(Full name) agree to being interviewed by Vivian Chuchu who is a student at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg for her Master's research project on long distance women bus drivers, at Autopax.

I volunteer to participate in her study and understand that I am free to withdraw at any time should I decide I no longer want to participate, even in retrospect. I understand my right to refuse to answer any questions. I will remain completely anonymous, no information that may identify me will be reported on her study and information I divulge to Vivian Chuchu shall **ONLY** be used for her Masters Research project.

Signed _____

Date _____

Consent form for tape recording

University of the Witwatersrand,
Johannesburg
Private Bag X 3,
Johannesburg
2050

I _____ agree to my interview with Vivian Chuchu for her study on long distance women bus drivers at Autopax being tape recorded. This tape and transcripts will not be seen or listened to by anyone else besides Vivian Chuchu and will solely be used for her Masters Research. All the recordings will be archived, with my identity protected, after the research.

Date.....

Signature.....

AUTOPAX

All Line Managers

19 August 2011
Tel: 0123154309

RESEARCH:

Approval has been given for Ms. V. Chuchu from University of Witwatersrand who is doing a research project on females working in positions previously occupied in a Male dominated environment to interview these employees and possibly some Males as well and also undertake a trip with them including accommodation at the book off points

Target groups are specifically your Female Fleet Controllers and Female Drivers

It would be appreciated if you could assist her with the necessary complimentary arrangement on one of these routes where Females are dominantly rostered and also assist with end point arrangement for her.

It may also be necessary to roster specific employees she would interview to report 30 minutes earlier for duty.

Kind Regards,

P.p Bhekani Khumalo
Executive Manager (Human Resources)

AUTOPAX PASSENGER SERVICES (PTY) LIMITED
Reg No. 1995/000861/07
A Subsidiary of PRASA
Trading as Translux

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