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Black women's perceptions of barriers to career advancement in the South African media industry.

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Black women's perceptions of barriers to career advancement in the South African media industry

By

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A Research Report submitted to the Witwatersrand Business School, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration

Wits Business School

February 2016

DECLARATION

I declare that this Research Report is my own, unaided work. It is being submitted for the Master of Business Administration at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other University.

_____

(Signature of candidate)

_____day of _____20_____in_____

ABSTRACT

Gender inequality remains a recurrent narrative in media institutions across the globe. Although employment figures indicate a surge in the number of women in the last decade, men continue to dominate the workplace, especially within senior management. Black women in South Africa face the dual challenge of race and gender thus limiting the career advancement within the industry.

This study examines the perceptions of a sample of 20 black women in the media industry regarding the barriers to career advancement. The study seeks to identify the variety of barriers impeding the career advancement of women from the limiting workplace environment, stereotypes, attitudes of colleagues, the multiplicity of roles women play in the work place and in society. Finally, the study also highlights potential interventions for leveraging black women in advancing their careers and improving their status in the workplace. The research study was conducted based on a combination of the descriptive and causal research designs. Qualitative research methods were chosen for this study given that it was focused in unearthing and documenting subjective experiences of black female managers in the media industry.

According to the findings of the study female black managers interviewed had ample opportunities to advance their careers within their organisations. All the women interviewed were in senior and executive management through both Affirmative Action (AA) and competence-based promotion. All the managers had at least a graduate qualification indicating that they possessed suitable qualifications for their positions.

The study found that the advancement of black female managers is still hampered by stereotypes that denote women as secondary to men in the workplace. The research study found that the top five and major barriers to

the career advancement of black women in the media industry are: balancing career and family responsibilities; office politics; skills and qualifications questioned; racial discrimination; and gender stereotypes.

The study recommends that media institutions should formulate workplace policies and procedures that give women an equal chance of being recognised and make progress in their careers. Media Institutions should also make provision for female black managers to be exposed to career advancement opportunities through mentoring and training without discrimination. Female black managers also need to remain more vigilant in dismantling the gender and race biases in the workplace by taking proactive steps in demanding opportunities and advancing their careers.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this research is to determine the perceptions of black women with regards to barriers to career advancement in the media industry in South Africa. Black women constitute a demographic section that was previously underrepresented in the workplace as a result of discriminatory apartheid policies. The study also seeks to identify the factors contributing towards the “glass ceiling” effect (McLeod, 2008), impeding advancement of women to senior management and leadership positions in the workplace.

1.2 Context of the study

Before 1994, black people and both black and white women in South Africa were a minority in the workforce (Block, Roberson & Neuger, 1995). Management consisted predominantly of white men. By 1998, very little had changed and black professionals still occupied less than 5 percent of managerial posts (The Economist, 1998).

In order to address the inequalities in employment opportunities and the redistribution of economic assets among race groups, the South African Government passed several legislations including the Employment Equity Act (EEA) of 1998, which made it illegal to unfairly discriminate against current or prospective employees on the basis of race. Furthermore, the EEA enforced companies to increase the number of people from “designated groups” which is defined as black people, women and people with disabilities (Employment Equity Act, 1998). This categorization indicated that black women can be susceptible to multiple discrimination on the basis of race, gender and disability (Busby, 2006). The Affirmative Action (AA) which is a composition of the EEA stipulates that qualified people from designated groups have equal job opportunities and must also be equally represented in all job categories and levels of the workplace.

Another piece of legislation passed in 1998 is the Skills Development Act (SDA), which requires employers to provide training and education to persons previously disadvantaged by unfair discrimination. This focuses on both the people who are unemployed and those who already employed to enable them to access employment and for growth for those already in employment. The Skills Development Levies Act was passed in 1999 and requires employers to pay a skills development levy towards the National Skills Fund. The government also passed the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) Act in 2003 to expedite economic transformation through the empowerment of African, Indian and Coloured people, as well as women, workers, the youth, people with disabilities and people living in rural areas; through:

- Increasing the number of black people that manage, own and control enterprises and productive assets;
- Facilitating ownership and management of enterprises and productive assets by communities, workers, cooperatives and other collective enterprises;
- Human-resource and skills development;
- Achieving equitable representation in all occupational categories and levels in the workforce;
- Preferential procurement; and
- Investment in enterprises that are owned or managed by black people.

Following the implementation of the EEA in 1998, by 2013 there was a significant increase in the number of managers in the ‘designated groups.’ Aggregate statistics indicate that in 2003 about 15% of the employed African population was in top management. This figure increased to almost 20% in 2013. For the Coloured employed population, the figures marginally increased from 4% to 5.1%; while for the Indian population group the statistics increased from 4.9% in 2003 to 8.4% in 2013. Among the white population the proportion of managers decreased from 76.3% in 2003 to 62.7% in 2013.

Aggregate gender statistics for top management indicate that the proportion of males decreased from 77.7% in 2003 to 70.1% in 2013 while the proportion of females in top management increased from 22.3% to 29.9% during the same period. However, regardless of the significant growth, statistics indicate that women comprise 32.1% of senior management while men constitute 67.9%. Globally, statistics indicate that the proportion of women in senior management is 24% (Commission for Employment Equity Commission, 2015), meaning that South Africa is above global average statistics.

Statistics South Africa (2014) shows that women constitute 45% of the Economically Active Population (EAP). The EAP shows the proportion of the population that is in the job market. Black African women constitute 34.6% of the EAP. Although women in general constitute the large proportion of national population, they are disproportionately represented at senior management level as shown by the statistics presented above. There needs to be more effort to increase the number of women in the job market as well as in managerial roles in the workplace (Stats SA, 2014).

In 2014 statistics indicated that the proportion of White women in management positions was 56.5%; 44.8% for Indian/Asian women; 20.1% for Coloured; and 17.1% for Black African women. The figures for males were predictably higher; 60.4% were White males; 46.5% Indian/Asian males; and the Coloured males constituted 19% of top management positions. The proportion of Black African males in management was 14.7% (Labour Force Survey, 2014).

The EEA aimed to address the disproportionate representation of black people in the work place. Black people is a general term used to refer to Africans, Coloureds and Indians in South Africa (Employment Equity Act, 1998). Studies indicate that employment equity (EE) initiatives in South Africa have benefited the advancement of black people (of African origin) only and that of these, black males have been the main beneficiaries. Although the same studies suggest that

Asians, coloureds and white males have been excluded, the development of black women continues to be neglected (Mathur-Helm, 2005:63).

Employment equity programmes also targeted women as a historically disadvantaged group. A study conducted in the United States (US) by Wilson et al. (2008) concluded that black women still experience not only male dominance, but also white domination in management. This view is synonymous to the experiences in South Africa where in managerial positions white women continue to benefit much more than black women due to historical factors that hindered their progression. Furthermore, black women are also viewed as subordinate to the development of black males due to the influence of patriarchy (Mathur-Helm, 2005). The above evidence emphasises dual competition that black females must overcome to be promoted to managerial and senior positions in the workplace.

The implementation of the EEA has yielded uneven outcomes in the various business sectors in South Africa. In the political landscape the number of women parliamentarians increased from 2.7 percent pre-1994 to 28 percent in 1994 and to 43 percent in 2012. Although still relatively high, this figure decreased to 40% in 2014. According to the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report (2012), South Africa is the fourth country in the world with the greatest number of women in parliament. While this is highly applauded similar progress is yet to be witnessed in the corporate sector (Gap Report, 2012). This research reveals that much more needs to be done by the representation of the statistics on gender in the workplace.

However, women in other sectors of the economy continue to be disenfranchised and unable to progress substantially in their careers (Print & Digital Media Transformation Task Team, 2013). The representation of women in the boardroom and newsrooms are still very low. Women constitute only 4% of boards in large media companies. Only 28% of the editors in newsrooms are female and only 14% are Black females (Daniels, 2014). The low numbers of women in

managerial positions is reinforced by the lack of women at the level of company ownership, as most media companies are owned by white males (Print & Digital Media Transformation Task Team, 2013). As outlined earlier, this is one area that the BBBEE is addressing through incentivizing companies to increase the number of black people that manage, own and control enterprises and productive assets.

According to a report by the Print & Digital Media Task Team (2013), profitability in the media industry has been slowing down and rather than recruiting most media companies are retrenching their staff and women are the most affected as they occupy lower positions. This further weakens the position of women in the workplace. From 2013 to 2014 the harsh economic climate resulted in approximately 600 retrenchments in the news division (Daniels, 2014). Therefore, unless performance of the industry improves, resulting in a higher level of recruitment, changing the racial and gender profile in managerial positions will remain a challenge. Within the media industry the trend has demonstrated a similar pattern of underrepresentation of women in managerial and leadership positions.

The ‘glass ceiling’ phenomenon is notably impeding the advancement of women in the workplace. The glass ceiling refers to the invisible barriers that prevent women from reaching senior management positions within organisations (Brewis & Linstead, 1999; Burgess & Tharenou, 2002). In order to escape the glass ceiling effect women have the option to be entrepreneurs and establish their own firms. The BBBEE programmes have potential to leverage women in this regard but the effectiveness of these is yet to be seen. However, there is evidence which reveals that women encounter the glass ceiling effect where they are systematically disenfranchised through poor access to financial capital to start and run their own businesses (Bosse & Taylor, 2012).

One of the barriers that obstruct the advancement of women into top positions is attributed to the historical background of South Africa that has led to the shortfall

in educational qualifications for designated groups. In this paper we have identified contradictory views on the effectiveness of AA policies in different countries. Many critics of affirmative action (AA) in the US argue that less qualified female minorities from AA practices, create labour market inefficiencies and/or inequalities in the workplace (Holzer & Neumark, 1999). This lack of educational qualifications results in a perception that black female managers are not well equipped for the positions they occupy.

In South Africa, AA has enabled women the right and privilege to compete on equal basis in all spheres of social, economic, and political activities (Msimang, 2001). The number of black women entering the workplace and being promoted has increased significantly since 1998 (Philip & Van Rooyen, 2001). While extending employment opportunities to designated groups, it has been observed that AA has disproportionately emphasized hiring and promotion with very little focus on training and mentoring (Slater, 2014). Although equal qualifications, skills and experience are seldom enough for women to advance in their careers, their appointment to positions through AA tends to be viewed with reservations as they are often viewed as being less capable than their counterparts (De Witt, Erasmus & Swanepoel, 1998). This is worsened by the entrenchment of discrimination of women in the workplace on the basis of race and gender (Mathur-Helm, 2005; Pillai et al., 2011).

Another barrier that hinders the advancement of women to top positions in the workplace is sex stereotypes. Heilman (1997) argues that the notion of patriarchy and sex stereotypes also play a role in obstructing the advancement of women in an organization and that paid work, especially if it is important and lucrative, is a man's domain. Thus, not only are most managers men but good management is also perceived to be a "manly" business. Mathur-Helm (2005) concurs with this notion and asserts that women are still regarded as secondary to men in the South African business culture. She further expands that many females tend to accept secondary roles without hesitation because they find it harder to excel

within the organisation. This is one of the reasons why deliberate interventions are required to raise the profile of women in the workplace and increase their chances of advancing to managerial and senior positions.

Other factors that hinder women from progressing into senior positions are socio-economic factors. Socio-economic factors are the social and economic experiences and realities that help mold one's personality, attitudes, and lifestyle. These socio economic factors include gender and sex stereotypes, remuneration differences, organizational structures and systems that discriminate against women in the workplace. These socio-economic factors can curtail the career advancement of women much more than the lack of qualifications or skills (Cooper-Jackson, 2001).

Gender disparities in the corporate world including the media industry remain strongly tilted towards male dominance, despite the implementation of AA initiatives enforced through the EEA (Zuiderveld, 2014).

However, even with the interventions over the years, there are still few women in senior management positions in either the public or the corporate sector. Mathur-Helm supports the latter statement stating that black females are still facing barriers, not only in acquiring corporate jobs, but also in advancing in corporate careers by attaining top positions (Mathur-Helm, 2005). From 2000 to 2012, the proportion of black women in top management increased from 12.4% to 19.5% while those in senior management increased from 21% to 27% during the same period. Men continue to dominate with 80% of all top management and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) positions filled by men (Development Indicators Report, 2012).

In the South African media industry there is evidence that gender inequality still persists (Löfgren-Nilsson, 2010; Ross & Carter, 2011). Recent research indicates that the number of female employees in newsrooms has increased significantly

although the proportion of women in leadership positions remains low (Daniels, 2014). Only a handful of black women have ascended to managerial and executive positions in recent years (Zuiderveld, 2014). Thus, men continue to dominate editorial, production, and technical departments whilst women tend to be employed in more supportive positions such as finance, marketing and human resources (Gender Links, 2009).

Despite the improvements over the years, there are still few women in senior management positions in either the public or the corporate sector. Mathur-Helm supports the latter statement stating that black females continue facing barriers, not only in getting corporate jobs, but also in advancing in corporate careers by attaining a senior position (Mathur-Helm, 2005).

1.3 Problem Statement

1.3.1 Main Problem

The main research problem is to identify the perceived barriers to career advancement for black women in the South African media industry.

1.3.2 Significance of the study

Most research on gender inequality in the workplace has focused on quantitative data to support its success. While this is important there is still a need to understand the qualitative data that explains the gender inequality. The qualitative data provides a subjective view emphasising on the issues that females face. The dual approach will provide rich data.

This study aims to fill this gap by focusing on the qualitative aspects, such as capturing the perceptions of women and the barriers they encounter in advancing in the media industry. These qualitative aspects will complement the existing body of knowledge on the effectiveness of EE policies. The findings of this study will be useful in guiding the media industry and other industries where gender inequality prevails and where EE Programmes are utilised. Academics, researchers and

women empowerment and activist groups will also benefit from the findings of this study.

Potential organisations that might benefit from this study include the following:

- Black Management Forum (BMF);
- The Business Women's Association of South Africa (BWASA);
- The South African Women in Dialogue;
- The South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR);
- The Government through its various departments and entities, such as the Commission on Gender Equality will also benefit from this study by influencing policy direction on gender transformation issues; and
- Media associations such as the Advertising Media Association of South Africa (AMASA) and Publishers Association of South Africa (PASA) would also benefit from this study.

1.4 Delimitations of the study

The study is limited to the perceptions of a relatively small sample of black female managers in the South African media industry confined to Johannesburg. However the findings are not limited to only the media industry and can still be useful in other industries, in a generalised manner.

1.5 Definition of terms

"Affirmative Action" (AA)is a term relating to programmes that aim to ensure that organisations take steps to increase the representation of historically under-represented groups, such as minorities and women, who have been victims of discrimination (Boeckmann & Feather, 2007).

"Barriers to career advancement refer to "events or conditions, within the person or in his or her environment, those make career progress difficult" (Swanson and Woitke, 1997:434).

“Black people” is a general term used to refer to Africans, Coloureds and Indians in South Africa based on the country’s apartheid history (Republic of South Africa, 1998). For the purposes of this study, the term “black people” will refer to South Africans of African descent employed in radio and television industry in Gauteng province.

“Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment” is an initiative by the South African government to address historical imbalances of the country by facilitating the participation of black people in the mainstream economy (Republic of South Africa, 2003)

“Employment Equity” (EE) means the economic empowerment of all black people including women, workers, youth, people with disabilities and people in rural areas; such empowerment would be through diverse but integrated socio-economic strategies (Republic of South Africa, 1998).

“Gender stereotypes” consists of beliefs about the psychological traits and characteristics of, as well as the activities appropriate to, men or women (United Nations Human Rights, 2014).

“Glass ceiling” refers to invisible or artificial barriers that prevent women from advancing past a certain level in the work place (McLeod, 2008; Burke and Vinnicombe, 2005).

“Sex stereotypes” are sets of attributes, including attitudes, personality traits, abilities, interests, and behaviors that are defined as appropriate for each sex (Psychological Dictionary, www.psychologydixtionary.org).

“Skills Development” is the provision of an institutional framework to devise and implement national, sector and workplace strategies to develop and improve the skills of the South African work force (Skills Development Act, 1998)

1.6 Assumptions

The following assumptions are made about the study:

- The respondents will respond honestly about their opinions relating to career advancement because of confidentiality and anonymity. However, the respondents may downplay some of the barriers they encounter in their organisations because, as senior managers, they are seen as having a "vested" interest in their organisation's success.

However, even in the possibility that the assumptions are true, the information gathered will provide a fair picture of the barriers that woman encounter in the workplace, particularly in the media industry.

1.7 Structure of research report

The dissertation is structured in five chapters as follows:

Chapter 1 gives a brief description and background to the research study, the objectives and reasons for the research undertaken and the methodologies chosen for the study.

Chapter 2 presents a synthesis of the literature review, highlighting the theoretical and conceptual framework relevant to the study. Sources of literature used include journals, published papers and articles and internet resources.

Chapter 3 examines the research design and methodology for this study. The chapter includes the sampling strategies used, data collection tools and processes, data analysis, interpretation and ethical considerations.

Chapter 4 focuses on data presentation and analysis. The analysed data was then interpreted in relation to the research objectives and questions.

Chapter 5 summarises the research findings and provides conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further studies.

1.8 Conclusion

This chapter briefly discussed the context of career advancement for black female black professionals in the workplace in general and with a particular focus on the media industry. The chapter also described the problem statement, research objectives and research questions plus provided insights into the significance of the research. The chapter also briefly discussed the research design, methodology and concludes with structure of the research report.

The next chapter will provide a review of literature in order to outline documented body of knowledge underpinning this study.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter will review and synthesise available literature on the context, trends and factors that impact on career advancement of black women in the workplace and specifically within the media industry. The review will also focus on the contribution of transformation policies and interventions to the number of women appointed to managerial and executive positions. Furthermore, the literature review will highlight barriers that black female manager's encounter, including the glass ceiling phenomena, gender stereotypes, and racial stereotypes and balancing career progression with family responsibilities.

2.2 Background Discussion

The discourse on gender inequality in the workplace is a global and recurring debate. Women remain disproportionately represented in the workplace, even with legislation for gender equity in place. In South Africa, the EEA has spearheaded the drive for EE and AA within organisations, improving the employment and progression of women. These interventions have coincided with a shift in business practices where the predominantly male business model has been challenged by increased competition, new technologies and shifting markets (England, 2010). Although women have progressed at entry and mid-level management positions in the last decade, career advancement into senior positions remains elusive for women in many countries, including South Africa (Zuiderveld, 2014; Daniels, 2013).

The obstacles preventing women from advancing in their careers are often based on the following factors, namely; gender, race, and lack of qualifications or skills (Bobbitt-Zeher, 2011; Prescott & Bogg, 2011). Lewis-Enright, Crafford & Crous, 2009) further adds that despite advocacy and lobbying for the recognition of gender rights and equity, obstacles preventing women progression still prevail. Notably, in the past, women had no place in the corporate workplace, although some jobs have always been seen as a female domain. This historical

background in the latter has resulted in the lack of clear cut career patterns for women who seek jobs at managerial levels in most organisations (Danziger & Eden, 2007). Heilman (2001) stated that career paths for women are often ambiguous but adds that women are also either unrewarded or rewarded unequally as compared to males. This is further supported by Hicks (2012) and Cha (2013) who state that the workplace remains structured in ways that still disenfranchise women.

2.3 Gender inequality in the media industry

Gender inequality in the media industry is not new and remains an issue for debate and concern (Daniels, 2013; Zuiderveld, 2014). At the fourth United Nations World Conference on Women (UNWCW) held in Beijing, in 1995, the stereotypical use of women in media and the lack of opportunities for career advancement of women emerged as one the key issues (Gadzekpo, 2009). At a political level, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Heads of States, in 1998, signed a protocol on gender and development in an effort to further highlight and address problems raised by gender stereotypes.

The media industry in South Africa has made significant strides in increasing the representation of black employees. The percentage of employees who are black increased from an estimated 35 percent in 2004 to 40 percent in 2006, exceeding the target of 25 percent for the year 2006 (Finweek, 2006a). However, this level of representation remains low in view of the national demographic profiles.

Various studies have shown that across the world most top positions in organisations are held by men. The level of gender inequality is more visible as professionals move towards top positions in organisations (Ross & Carter, 2011) and female professionals tend to be concentrated in lower level positions (Gender Links, 2009; North, 2009; Löfgren-Nilsson, 2010). The findings of a study on the Status of Women in the News Media, which was done in 500 media companies in

nearly 60 countries revealed that 73% of the top management jobs are occupied by men compared to 27% occupied by women (Global Report, 2011).

According to the Commission for Employment Equity Annual Report 2014/2015 the proportion of women in senior management in organisations in South Africa increased from 22.3% in 2003 to 32.1% in 2014 (see Figure 1 below).

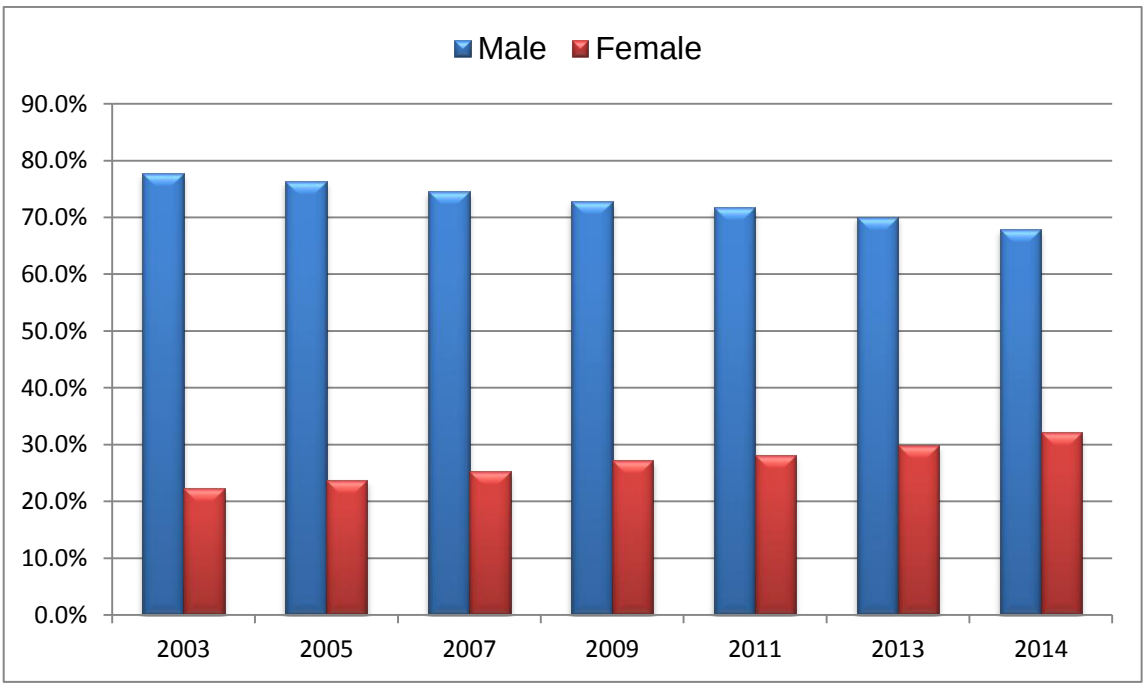


Figure 1: Population distribution trends for senior management level from 2003 to 2014 by gender

Figure 2 below shows that there is a disproportionate racial distribution within the senior management level with a strong bias towards white managers in the country. Black African managers constitute about 20.5% while the white managers constitute 59% (Commission for Employment Equity, 2015).

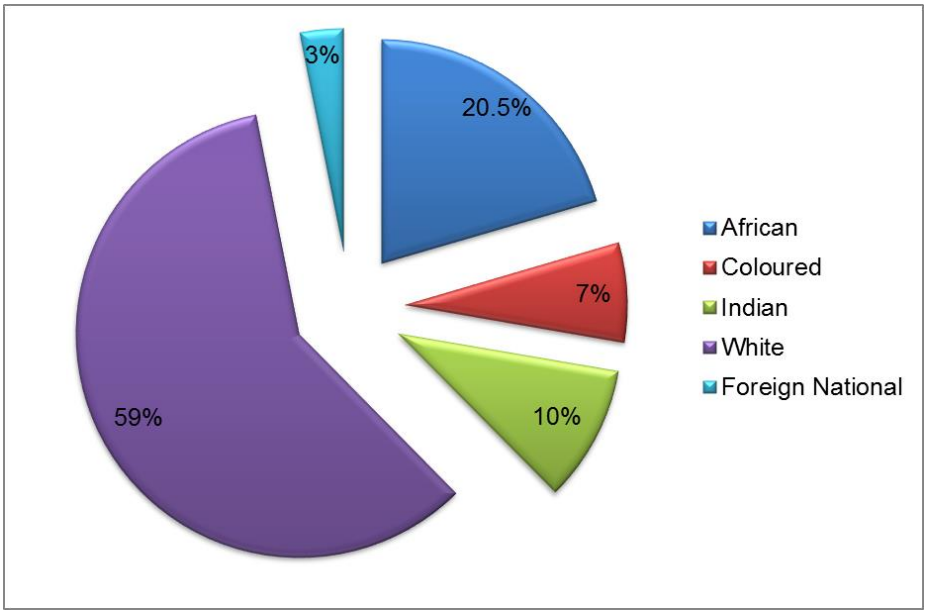


Figure 2: Workforce profile at the senior management level by population group

Thus the career development of women in the workplace remains constrained by multiple barriers including race and gender (Mathur-Helm, 2006). The next section looks at career development and sets the context for exploring the barriers faced by women in this regard.

2.4 The concept of career advancement

A career is a pattern of work experience spanning the course of a person's life and in most situations it is usually perceived as a series of stages reflecting the movement of one phase to another (Carmeli, Shalom & Weisberg, 2007). Beukes (2009) further defines a career as the sequence of interactions of individuals with society, education and organisations throughout their lifespan.

Career advancement is one of the most important elements for employee motivation, satisfaction and retention regardless of demographic factors such as gender, age and race (Louie, 2013; Zhao and Zhou, 2008). The perception of career advancement can be viewed from a subjective and objective point of view and varies from individual to individual (Dreis, Hofmans, Pepermans & Rypens, 2009). Subjective career advancement includes attainment of personal career

goals and aspirations while objective career advancement reflects work achievements, salary, position and promotions (Heslin, 2003). Louie (2013) indicates that despite the varying interpretations of career advancement the following components remain essential: “expanding employees’ skills sets, giving them additional responsibilities that lead to an evolution or a changing of their roles, acknowledging accomplishments through raises and promotions, and offering a tailored career advancement plan for each employee that aligns with his or her professional goals” (Louie, 2013).

Career advancement of women in the media landscape has been documented in the Global Media Monitoring Project programme (1995–2010) report and the Global Report on the Status of Women in the News Media (2011). These reports indicate that there is still a gender imbalance in the media industry with women still struggling to attain career progress equivalent to their male counterparts (Global Report, 2011).

However, the attainment of career advancement is rarely a smooth one. There are various barriers that are often encountered across sectors. Furthermore, women tend to face specific obstacles towards achieving their career goals. These barriers to career advancement for women are detailed in the following section.

2.5 Barriers to career advancement

2.5.1 The glass ceiling

According to Pillai, Prasad & Thomas, there is a ‘glass ceiling’ in most countries for female managers especially in the middle and senior management levels (Pillai, Prasad & Thomas, 2011). Adair adds that the glass ceiling metaphor is also extended to barriers faced by minorities and disadvantaged groups that keep them from rising to upper ranks within the organisation, despite their qualifications and achievements (Adair, 1999).

Research has revealed that the glass ceiling phenomenon exists even in organisations with policies that support women. This is because other variables impede women's career advancement. These variables include beliefs and attitudes held by members in the organisation, the contextual aspects of the organisation and work pressure within the organisation (Hewlett, 2002; Cooper-Jackson, 2001). According to Mathur-Helm (2006:311) the glass ceiling effect "refers to the failure of women and other minority groups in climbing the corporate ladder despite seeing the top jobs, but still not reaching them due to discriminatory barriers". The theorists above have clearly demonstrated a common thread of what the glass ceiling phenomenon is.

Various studies conducted in South Africa have confirmed the glass ceiling effect exists in the corporate (Abrahams, 1997; Hewlett, 2002), education (Parsadh, 2001), media (Zuiderveld, 2014) and in the transport sector (Govender, 1997). Some of the major barriers listed as contributing factors to the glass ceiling effect are unrelenting job pressures, the male attitudes towards working women, role conflict, insufficient maternity benefits, re-entry into the market, and the lack of mentors ,role models, day-care facilities as well as the lack of part-time employment (Parsadh, 2001; Govender, 1997).

According to Cotter, Heemsen, Ovadia & Vanneman (2001) the glass ceiling exists in any workplace if one or more of the following three conditions are present. Firstly, gender or racial difference or preference in appointment that is not explained by other job-relevant characteristics of the employee. Secondly, gender or racial difference or preference in appointment that is greater at higher levels of an outcome than at lower levels of an outcome; gender or racial inequality in the chances of advancement into higher levels, not merely the proportions of each gender or race currently at those higher levels, Finally, gender or racial inequality that increases over the course of a career.

Studies have shown that women experience the glass ceiling effect early in their careers (Phillips & Imhoff, 1997) and it continues throughout their working lives (Adair, 1999; Lyness & Thompson, 2000). In order to break the glass ceiling effect, female minorities and disadvantaged groups have to overcome some of the barriers like isolation, sex-stereotyping and performance pressures (Steyn, 2011).

2.5.2 Racial Issues

The environment of South African organisations is still not friendly towards women and it discriminates on the basis of race and gender, this culture has been institutionalised in many organisations due to the country's history (Mathur-Helm, 2005:61).

According to Heilman (1997) black females have not occupied management posts. Mathur-Helm states that black women in South African organisations were essentially excluded from mainstream management jobs based on race and gender roles stereotypes (Mathur-Helm, 2005:61).

Studies in the US revealed that ethnic minorities have experienced more barriers in career advancement than other racial groups (Tidwell, 1992; Lopez & Ann-Yi, 2006). Furthermore, ethnic minorities were also noted to be the racial group unable to cope with the career-related barriers (Luzzo, McWhirter & Hawley, 2001). Another study in the US showed that most women indicated that the hardest part of working in the trade is not the job itself but the prevailing attitude that women do not belong in that particular trade. The study found that at least half of the black women reported that many white men on the job had never worked with women who were non-white, and did not treat them with resepect. In the same study, black women also observed that it is harder for them to get materials and for their ideas to be taken seriously, compared to white women (Price, 2002). In South Africa studies have also shown that black women face prejudice on the basis of gender and race thereby constraining their career advancement (Parsadh, 2001; Govender, 1997; Abrahams, 1997).

2.5.3 Barriers due to work environment and organisational structure

Limited support structures and networking opportunities also pose barriers for the advancement of women (Rowe & Crafford, 2003). An unsupportive work environment is another barrier to career advancement of black people, especially when they are routinely excluded from social gatherings within the office.

Blum, Fields & Goodman (1994) adds that work that is structured to compel the incumbent to travel regularly may not be suited to most women, who would prefer to be close to home and family. Most organisations also remain structured in ways that preclude the integration of work and family responsibilities. This systematically disadvantages women and limits their career progression (Frome et al. 2006; Cha, 2013).

Research has shown that in some cases information may be deliberately withheld from female employees and these employees are constantly under pressure to perform in their job (Morrison, 1992; Wentling, 1992). Wentling (1992) adds that there is further evidence to show that most black people lack the skills to manage job and office politics. This failure to pay adequate attention to organisational politics results in most black employees failing to advance in their careers.

Organisation structure has been found to limit the progression of women through promotion, especially in organisations such as media houses where male hierarchies are entrenched (Kirai & Mukulu, 2012). This is largely because men have invariably dominated policy development in the workplace (Taylor, 1997). Thus the work environment and how organisations are structured may deliberately or inadvertently curtail the advancement of women.

2.5.4 Skills of employees and lack of mentors

Black women come from an historical background where they were disadvantaged in terms of education and job opportunities (Morrison, 1992). This meant that women often lacked the skills required to secure employment. The

EEA was passed to bring lasting societal transformation by enforcing specific measures on designated employers (Moroosi, 2007). Although the EEA was legislated primarily to address this historical injustice, women still lag behind men in job related skills (Rangarajan, 2010; Spiegel, 2008).

The African National Congress (ANC) further expand that black women in particular, come from an historical background where they were disadvantaged in terms of education and job opportunities (Meer, 2013). Due to lack of educational attainment, women required experience to advance to senior posts. In order to gain experience they have also had to fill a vacant position temporarily through an interim appointment and remain in the position in order to be appointed.

However, in South Africa, women in political and civil service institutions have progressed in their careers than in most sectors. Prior to 1994, female representation in Parliament accounted for 2.7% but this has increased significantly to 42%. This places South Africa, fourth position globally for the largest number of women in Parliament (World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report, 2012). However, female presentation in parliament dropped to 40% in 2014 (Robinson, 2014).

The phenomenon of women entering government in large numbers has benefited women's empowerment. In South Africa the government has made significant effort in empowering women in the spheres of politics, the public sector and education. In Asia and the Pacific, for instance, research studies concluded that women entering local government have gained a sense of empowerment by asserting control over resources and officials and by challenging males (Heilman, 2001).

However, the effectiveness of these women in government positions is not yet evident, particularly in South Africa. Maphunye (2006) found that the struggle for the further improvement of women's situations still continues to ensure meaningful

benefits for both women and the public institutions in which they have chosen to advance their careers.

According to a Mckinsey Quarterly article (2014), even with equal skills and qualifications, it is still much more difficult for women to ascend to a senior position in corporate organisations. The performance of organisations with women in top positions also comes into play. A survey undertaken in the US by a research company called Catalyst (2004) reveals that Fortune 500 companies with the females women in senior positions tend to outperform their peers with an average return on investment of more than 53 percent.

Despite evidence of company performance, women still remain underrepresented at the top level in corporations, across all industries and countries despite mounting evidence suggesting that companies with more women in top positions tend to perform better, both organizationally and financially. On the other hand, three recent Australian surveys of the numbers of women in senior management and on boards of Australia's "top 200" companies, represented 90 percent of Australia's market capitalisation, provide evidence that relatively few women are advancing to executive or board positions (Still, 2006:181). This Australian finding suggests that companies in many other countries are not yet reaping the benefits of having women in senior management positions.

Other common barriers to career advancement noted include lack of mentors, lack of relevant qualifications and poor performance and prejudice and stereotypes (Cameli, 2003).

Given the male domination in the workplace the lack of mentorship is inevitable as women continue to be disenfranchised (Hicks, 2012). It has been observed in some studies that men desire power and status in the workplace and are therefore unlikely to provide mentorship to female employees (Davey, 2008; Prescott & Bogg, 2011). Mentoring is regarded as an important tool for employee

development and is likely to enhance the identity of women in the workplace (Noe, 2010). Mentoring enables the integration of women into the culture of an organisation, learn to network and establish professional contacts (Coleman, Power, Williams, Carpentieri & Schulkin, 2005). Unfortunately, there is a lack of female mentors and role models in the workplace and it has been observed that many executive women are not willing to help and promote younger women in their careers (April, Dreyer, & Blass, 2007).

2.5.5 Remuneration differences

Economic participation concerns not only the actual numbers of women participating in the labour force, but also their remuneration on an equal basis. Worldwide, outside the agricultural sector, in both developed and developing countries, women are still averaging slightly less than 78% of the wages given to men for the same work; this is a gap which refuses to close in even the most developed countries (Augusto, 2005). Michelle Brown, vice president of BWASA adds that, “There are sectors of business where women are still being paid less than men. This is due to traditional mindset and needs to be changed to level the playing field, where the same financial reward is given based on job delivery and results rather than on gender”. The corporate environment has a system that has entrenched male dominance and women seldom set the standard. Despite the steady increase in the number of professional women, their positions in organisations involve lower paid roles than their male counterparts (Millmore et al. 2007).

Salary differences present another dimension that needs to be addressed. However, remuneration can be a vehicle for increasing the number of women in management, as income is a motivating factor and it may influence career advancement by women who may be unhappy about their current pay levels (Millmore et al., 2007).

Okpara (2004) and Jamili (2008) further explain that some roles in the workplace are segregated based on gender, with predominantly female jobs receiving lower pay than predominately male jobs. This salary gap is very narrow at the entry level vacancies and is wider at higher levels of education, supporting the theory that wider pay gaps exist at the upper end of wage hierarchies. This trend limits the opportunities of women to aspire to advance further in their careers as income is a major motivating factor(Millmore et al., 2007).The theorists in the latter have demonstrated that income is a major motivating factor towards career advancement in the workplace and gender inequalities are visible as a barrier towards woman progression.

2.5.6 Gender stereotypes in the workplace

The primary barriers that women encounter in their quest for career advancement are due to stereotypes that exist about women and about the workplace. There are jobs that are seen as female preserves; for example, nurses, librarians, secretaries and elementary school teachers. These jobs are seen as requiring feminine skills. Senior jobs are viewed differently and are seen as earmarked for male employees. This is because achievement at senior levels is associated with being aggressive and emotional tough, which are characteristics that are ascribed to males (Heilman, 1997).

Women tend to be associated with interpersonal skills which concoct a negative attitude when compared to their male counterparts who are associated with being task orientated. As a result the career aspirations of women are not properly considered. This stereotypic thinking inhibits both the growth in numbers of women in the workplace and their professional advancement in their respective careers (Mathur-Helm, 2005).

Pillai et al. (2011) state that seldom are equal qualifications, skills and experience enough for women to advance within organisations. There is evidence that women are poor negotiators and generally dislike the negotiation process for capturing

organisational power. Moore (2006) adds that women are less likely to play the political game to move ahead and expect to be recognised and rewarded for their achievements. However, Nesbit & Seeger (2007) argue that women bring distinct personality and motivational strengths to their roles and are more conducive to today's diverse workforce. A study by Heilman (1997:878) also found that women are more committed to their careers, more willing to relocate and more likely to make their jobs top priority when family/ work conflicts occur.

One of the factors that prevent women from advancing in their careers has been the societal norms relating to appropriate gender roles. However, in other societies there are factors that support women in management. In Turkey for example, where there is a relatively young age of corporations and a need for qualified staff, the support factors include the presence of a family network to provide child care, the availability of inexpensive child care help and there is generally supportive "family friendly" though paternalistic organisational cultures (Burke, 2008).

Patriarchy still prevails in South African organisations and globally preventing women from achieving professional and career objectives while working in those organisations. It appears that South African organisations have not evolved enough to accommodate women aspiring to advance in their careers (Mathur-Helm, 2005).

Even though women are entering professional and senior ranks within organisations, they encounter barriers in advancing their careers. Burke (2008) states that sources of challenge are common to all senior employees and include high stakes, adverse business conditions and dealing with staff members. However, women may experience additional barriers such as prejudice and isolation as well as higher performance standards, more adverse conditions such as resentment and hostility of male staff, more scrutiny and more "second shift"

work. These barriers may have adverse effects on the performance of women in the workforce (Burke, 2008).

The foregoing indicates that gender stereotyping affects women in various ways and entrenches the exclusion of women from workplace initiatives and programmes that could otherwise help propel their careers. It is clear from the various studies cited above that the workplace is still not favourable for women.

2.5.7 Confidence and insecurities in work performance

One of the explanations for the lack of advancement of women in organisations lays blame on women themselves (Heilman, 1997). This theory states that women come to the workplace with inherent deficits that derive from being female. This is based on the perception that skills and attitudes of men and women differ and that women's skills are often regarded as lacking. This perception obstructs women's advancement in an organisation.

The view that women are secondary to men in the workplace has generated a lack of confidence in the performance of female managers to the extent that their competence is judged using criteria that differ from their male counterparts (Still, 2006). According to Heilman (1997), it is a commonly accepted idea that men will advance in their careers while women lag behind. For instance, not all senior female professionals will support other women progressing in the workplace. The women who have already advanced within their organisations got there without assistance from other women and therefore cannot understand why others cannot do the same (Rindfleish, 1999).

Mathur-Helm (2005) further asserts that women are still regarded as secondary to men in the South African business culture, and many women accept secondary roles without hesitation. There is also an assertion that women prefer support, rather than more advanced and senior roles because of the nature of the work (Still, 2006:188). A recent study has shown that although women enter the

workplace with confidence to advance their careers, their aspiration levels tend to decrease after two years. The reasons of this lack of confidence are that women do not feel supported by their managers and often receive only negative feedback that discourage them (Coffman & Neuenfeldt, 2014).

2.5.8 Balancing career growth and family responsibilities

Many researchers note that business and work ethics are not structured around women's needs. The key social challenge faced by women is the role they play in the family. Research evidence illustrates that women in business globally, play roles as mothers, wives and managers. While they desire and enjoy playing these roles, there is generally a huge trade-off between one and another (Woodhams, 2008; Bilgel, Ozcakir, Sadikoglu & Aytekin, 2011). According to study by Hendey (2007), women have to deal with work pressures at emotional, psychological and behavioural levels. Furthermore, women have to content with time pressures as they manage and balance work duties and family responsibilities.

A study by Pillai et al. (2011) on why women still experience a challenge in climbing the corporate ladder found that women reported difficulty in maintaining a balance between family and career. Pillai and others (2011) also observed that women with family and work responsibilities assign top priority to the family, and this often seems to be a major impediment to career progression. Company policies and practices such as maternity leave, suitable incentives for women, favourable working hours for women, and appropriate times for networking and strategic workshops, also work against career progression of women.

Furthermore, Lamsa (2008) points out that it is regrettable that female values, attitudes, contexts, and life experiences are not incorporated into the concept of traditional careers. Important career decisions are based often on social networks that exclude women (Pillai et al. 2011). As a result the advancement of women is jeopardised.

In China, there are clear expectations that a Chinese woman's primary value is not within the world of salaried employment, but as a mother, care giver, and homemaker. Most Chinese women are still expected to put family interests before careers. Woodhams (2008) found that, in order for women to manage their careers successfully, they accepted long working hours and work stresses. They also managed tensions inherent in the combination of work and home that are neither new nor unique to this study.

In South Africa, as in many countries globally, women face the work-family conflict and struggle to keep a good balance (Winn, 2004). A good balance is described as, "achieving satisfying experiences in all domains of life" (Kirchmeyer, 2000:81). According to Lossek and Ozeki (1998) work-family definitions require a dynamic interpretation as this will change from time to time for different contexts. This assertion is based on the acknowledgement that having multiple roles may benefit women by increasing opportunities for social interaction and personal development, create a sense of purpose and enhance self-esteem (Gill, 2000). According to Barnett (1988) the rewards of combining work and family life may outweigh the costs work-family conflict. Although according to Newell (1996) although women expand their roles to encompass paid employment men are not expanding their roles to encompass the child-care and domestic work. However, the skills and attitudes acquired by women in one role can be applied beneficial in the other role (Crouter, 1981).

2.6 Initiatives in place to address gender inequality to promote career advancement for black women

The social and cultural stigmas create barriers to the empowerment of women, not only in their employment, but also in their growth and development in organisations. The obvious disregard and underutilisation of women in the South African employment market is a waste of a valuable resources (Mathur-Helm, 2005:57). The absence of women from structures of governance inevitably means that national, regional and local priorities are typically defined without meaningful

input from women, whose life experience gives them an awareness of community needs, concerns and interests that differs from that of men (Augusto, 2005). With the various kinds of workplace barriers identified above, there is overwhelming potential for women to be demotivated and demoralised by the culture and barriers that exist. A study by Rosen, Templeton & Kichline (1981) on the work motivations of men and women in Columbia, showed that career motivations are surprisingly similar for men and women, at least in theory. In the early stages of their careers, the opportunity to experience a sense of accomplishment by working on a challenging job is equally important for male and female employees and it is the environment and accompanying barriers that demotivate employees.

It is important for businesses to appreciate the importance of preparing women to advance in their careers. The loss of women during their career paths leads to a number of potential direct and indirect costs which are short term and long term, for organisations. Such costs include losing insight from experienced professional women, who are needed in the workplace to constitute a powerful workforce. There are also opportunity costs associated with wasted knowledge, skills and expertise when women drop out along the career pathways within organisations (Nesbit & Seeger, 2007).

Additionally, there are the costs associated with the failure of organisations to benefit from the different perspectives that senior women employees can contribute to encourage more innovative thinking (Nesbit & Seeger, 2007). Okpara (2004) contend there is a benefit for organisations in having happy women employees as job satisfaction can lead to cost reductions by reducing absenteeism, task errors and turnover. These variables are costly to an organisation as they could lead to low morale, poor performance, lower productivity and higher costs of hiring, retention, and training.

There are various interventions that could be employed to offset some of these barriers that women face in employment; these interventions include training,

mentorship and culture training for existing male managers (Busby, 2006). Price (2002) adds that many economists ascribe the discrimination of women in the workplace to deep seated racial and gender perceptions. These perceptions are further compounded by the differences in educational attainment, skills and work experience.

The new democratic dispensation in South Africa in 1994 ushered in a political vision where discriminatory policies were abolished. Early transformation processes benefited from the support of a wide base of stakeholders including women's interest groups, who ensured that gender issues were incorporated in policy making. Thus a well-developed institutional system emerged in which gender equality was a key political goal (Hassim, 2003; Mvimbi, 2009).

2.6.1 State interventions - Employment Equity

In 1998, the South African government introduced the EEA with the aim of ensuring gender and ethnic equality within companies with more than 50 employees (Goga, 2001). This move was widely supported by various stakeholders including feminist scholars and activists (Mvimbi, 2009). Evidence from elsewhere suggests that the presence of women in the workforce lowers the disproportionate levels of poverty amongst women, and serves as an important step towards raising household income and encouraging economic development in countries throughout the world (Augusto, 2005).

Busby (2006) states that AA interventions are used to combat a workplace where one group of employees has a weaker starting point because they were previously excluded from senior positions. Thus when they are appointed to these positions, their lack of the experience needed to perform at those levels is often challenging. The attainment of equality is thus unlikely without some intervention aimed at overcoming barriers that may be challenging by some individual members of that group (Busby, 2006). These barriers are impossible to be resolved by each individual as they pertain to barriers due to the historical background of all women

in the workplace. For instance in the mining sector, anyone wanting to progress in their career would need work underground for a while and it was illegal for women to take underground work (Mathur-Helm, 2005). However, in the post-apartheid era such requirements have fallen away.

In South Africa, studies argue that EE has benefited the advancement of black people (of African Origin) only and that of these, black males have been the main beneficiaries. The same studies suggest that Asians, coloureds and white males have been excluded. The development of women is neglected and seen as subordinate to the development of black males. As a result women still experience not only male dominance, but also white domination in the workplace. Ultimately, black women remain disadvantaged in the workplace while white women have disproportionately benefited from EE (Mathur-Helm, 2005). According to Naude (2007), women as a defined group were never prohibited by the law from occupying certain positions as the law discriminated on the basis of race and not gender. However, in order to be more effective it is suggested that transformation policies should apply to black women first instead of appointing white women to achieve EE targets.

The implementation of EEA has been hampered by adversarial relationships, where organisational culture does not embrace diversity management. This is particularly significant where organisational policies, procedures and practices still discriminate against employees on the basis of gender or race (Thomas, 2002). The EE programmes have also been viewed by white employees as exclusionary and resulted in some resigning from their jobs and emigrating (Romano, 2007; Erasmus, 2008). However, effort has been made in most organisations to manage negative perceptions regarding EE and effectively implement transformation programmes in the workplace (Oosthuizen & Naidoo, 2010).

Skills Development

South Africa faces the dual problem of both a serious skills shortage in the workplace and high levels of unemployment (Du Toit, 2012; Goga & Van der Westhuizen, 2012). South Africa is not producing enough skills to support its global competitiveness and economic development (Janse Van Rensburg, Visser, Wildschut, Roodt & Kruss, 2012).

The implementation of the Skills Development Act (SDA) has been faced with numerous barriers including poor quality of training, lack of mentorship and inconsistent standards of assessing programmes (Du Toit, 2012). Mummenthey, Wildschut & Kruss (2012) noted that there is inconsistent implementation of workplace learning with insufficient monitoring of practical work exposure.

Black female professionals come from a historical background that disadvantaged them in terms of education and opportunities. While workplace skills plans should be seen as a strategic priority within organisations and continuously have executive buy-in or support, the skills development requirements are routinely side-lined. In a broad sense, workplace skills planning should be aligned with performance management and other human resource management systems, procedures and practices (Moletsane, Chikoko, Ntombela, Kruger & Pithouse-Morgan, 2010). In this regard, there can be deliberate interventions targeted to assist and guide women in planning their careers so they can progress and be more effective in the positions they hold (Lamsa, 2008). The skills development and equity targets clearly indicate that the beneficiaries of these interventions should be 85% black, 54% female and 4% people with disabilities (Department of Labour, 2004).

The number of women participating in training programmes in both technical and professional areas has increased substantially over time (Kraak, 2008; Paterson, 2008). However, gender stereotyping remains a challenge that constrains women from fully participating and benefiting from skills development programmes

(Moletsane et al, 2010). According to the ILO (2014) women still continue to experience occupational segregation when it comes to training thus limiting their career advancement options. Furthermore, attaining higher levels of skills have not necessarily translated into better jobs for the majority of women (ILO, 2012a).

For skills development programmes to benefit women there is need for equal participation of women and men in training programmes; equal participation of women and men in the management of skills development systems and institutions; and lowering gender segregation both within and between occupations (ILO, 2014).

2.6.2 Women self-interventions

Mentorship

Mentors have been defined as higher ranking, influential, senior organisational members with advanced experience and knowledge who are committed to providing upward mobility and support to a mentee (Collins, 1983; Kram, 1985) and Roche, 1979). Given the historical racial imbalances in the workplace at managerial levels, most high ranking, influential, senior organisational members with advanced experience tend to be white males. The challenge that arises is that white male mentors may prefer to mentor another white individual over a black person (Wentling and Palma-Rivas, 2008).

Female professionals in most corporate organisations lack appropriate training and support to adequately perform their duties. Women are often isolated or excluded in professional development opportunities, especially in male-dominated workplaces (Ella, Bell & Nkomo, 2001; Ragins, 2012).

And yet mentorship is a practical and effective strategy for supporting female professionals (Zuiderveld, 2014). A well placed, successful and encouraging mentor can be a woman's champion as she navigates the corporate environment and learns the nature of the business. A mentor can provide the necessary

direction to assure the person being mentored that he or she is progressing in the right direction. Mentors can provide the guidance and encouragement to overcome such obstacles as isolation, lack of credibility and lack of political savvy (Jeruchim & Shapiro, 1992; Morrison, 1992).

However, many women lack influential mentors who may be an asset to their advancement (Catalyst, 2000). Already successful and influential women often lack the time or inclination to mentor other women. Moreover white men who might be able to provide such mentorship may be uncomfortable forming relationships with black women due to racial stereotypes (Ragins, 2012).

2.6.3 Organisational interventions

Performance management

The inclusion of a gender perspective in organisational processes enables the promotion of gender equality. Generally, performance appraisals have two purposes. The first is to provide a source of information for management to make decisions about promotions and salaries, training needs and training support; the second is as a feedback tool for employees, facilitating personal improvement and development (Millmore & Biggs, 2007).

Research was conducted by Millmore & Biggs (2007) to find out whether there are any significant differences between the overall performance rating scores achieved by female and male professionals on a 360-degree appraisal scheme. It was found that overall performance ratings were higher for females compared to male professionals which eliminate the subjectivity inherent in performance appraisal systems (Millmore & Biggs, 2007). However, according to Buchanan (2014), there is a perception that when employees begin a job they often have some preconceived notion about gender and performance. Invariably, men see themselves in an advantageous position and view females they work with as inferior performers. According to Woodhams (2008) having children also makes women seem less competent and less available to meet workplace

responsibilities. Moreover, women are also often held to higher standards than men and their competence rate is rated lowly.

2.6.5 Other interventions to address gender inequality

One of the suggestions made in the literature, on the issue of assisting women in employment, is that organisations must look at “new time” employment; in other words, working times that suits women’s lifestyle. Also, there is a need for flexible working arrangements for women who are qualified to but have other commitments that require significant demands on their time (Pillai, Prasad & Thomas, 2011).

Other recommendations put forward by the Committee for Economic Development of Australia (CEDA) (2013) include:

- Breaking down stereotypical gender role barriers embedded in workplace culture. For example, by encouraging fathers to take more parental leave to which they are entitled;
- Reassessing the historical way that companies have organised work by exploring alternatives to the nine-to-five work system, and reconsidering how childcare and other non-work commitments fit within the system; and
- Exploring the feasibility of designing workplaces that promote flexible work practices for all employees regardless of gender and family status. Mainstreaming flexibility can help to counter the association of flexible work with ‘women’s work’.

Organisations need to create women- and culturally-friendly environments in order to realize the full potential of people of different races and gender. This could be done by creating an environment that will allow black women professionals to perform and pursue their goals (Buchanan, 2014).

2.6.6 Effectiveness of transformation programmes

Despite the tremendous strides that South Africa has made in the past few years in promoting and advancing women in the workplace, women are still struggling to break the glass ceiling, with only 7.1 percent of women directors in the country, compared to Australia with 8.4 percent, Canada with 11.2 percent and the United States with 13.6 percent women board directors (Mathur-Helm, 2005:58).

With respect to South African media companies, in 1994 there were no black women who had advanced to senior positions. By 1999, six percent of black women in the media industry had advanced to senior positions (Goga, 2001). However, in 2005, women still remained incapacitated to advance their careers as the workplace conditions continued to be favourable to the progression of white men (Steyn, De Beer & Steyn, 2005:102). Overall, the proportion of women in senior management in the country has steadily increased since 1994. In 2003 there 22.3% of top management were women. This figure increased steadily to 25.3% in 2007. By 2013 the figure had increased to 29.9%. Current figures indicate that 32.1% of women are in senior management.

Woodhams (2008) states that in China, women's career development relied mainly on AA interventions for recruitment and promotion. A ratio of seven men to three women in management was introduced to state owned organisations to guarantee that new woman recruits were able to advance to higher levels in the organisation. However, this commitment gave the impression that women were promoted to fill a quota rather than because of their competence and leadership skills. This created a situation where there was no confidence in women's performance as they were hired to meet a recruitment ratio versus their performance capabilities. Transformation policies fall short when there are no measures in place to monitor, evaluate and determine why designated group members are not performing (Busby, 2006).

Transformation policies have resulted in an increase in the number of women advancing in their careers. However, even with quota systems, some obstacles still exist (Heilman, 1997). It has been pointed out that entrenched power structures and traditional male-dominated social systems, pose problems for women seeking to advance in the organisation, and without social and family support, women cannot avail themselves of the quota system (Heilman, 1997).

The 1995 Beijing Platform for Action is aimed towards the goals of equality, development and peace for all women everywhere in the interest of all humanity. The Platform for Action is an agenda for women's empowerment with the aim of removing all the obstacles to women's active participation in all spheres of public and private life. This process is achieved through implementing full and equal share in economic, social, cultural and political decision-making. The platform supports the idea of creating opportunities for women to advance in careers because it strengthens democracy and promotes its proper functioning (Anon, 2001).

Transformational policies and initiatives have paved the way for women to enter the workplace in large numbers. While this is a significant achievement women still face various barriers in getting recognition, mentorship and training opportunities in order to advance their careers (Heilman, 1997).

Table 1: Summary of barriers to career advancement for women in the workplace

Barrier	**Characteristics in the workplace**	**Reference**	**Interview Question**
Glass ceiling	• There are invisible or artificial barriers that prevent women from advancing past a certain level • The glass ceiling typically affects female managers especially in the in middle and senior management levels • This includes barriers faced by minority groups that prevent them from rising up the corporate ladder, despite qualifications. • Not rising due to discriminatory barriers preference not explained by job related characteristics like gender , racial or gender • A gender or racial difference or preference in appointment that is not explained by other job-relevant characteristics of the employee; • A gender or racial difference or preference in	McLeod, 2008 Burke & Vinnicombe, 2005 Pillai, Prasad & Thomas, 2011 Adair, 1999 Hewlett, 2002 Cooper-Jackson, 2001 Lyness & Thompson, 2000 Cotter, Heemsen, Ovadia & Vanneman, 2001 Steyn, 2011	6 – 7

Barrier	Characteristics in the workplace	Reference	Interview Question
	appointment that is greater at higher levels of an outcome than at lower levels of an outcome; • A gender or racial inequality in the chances of advancement into higher levels, not merely the proportions of each gender or race currently at those higher levels; and • A gender or racial inequality that increases over the course of a career. • Women, minorities and disadvantaged groups have to overcome isolation, sex-stereotyping and performance pressures in order to break the glass ceiling.		
Racial issues	• Women still discriminated on the basis of gender and race • Corporate managerial positions have never been a place for black women • Ideas suggested by women in managerial positions not	Mathur-Helm, 2005:61 Heilman, 1997 Tidwell, 1992; Lopez & Ann-Yi, 2006 Luzzo, McWhirter &	6.7, 8, 9

Barrier	Characteristics in the workplace	Reference	Interview Question
	taken seriously or adequately supported • Black women not treated with basic respect • Historical issues systematically excluded women from management positions.	Hawley, 2001 Price, 2002	
Unsupportive Work environment and limiting organisational and work structures	• Women routinely excluded from social environments • Limited suitable networking and strategic workshops • Lack on mentors • Unsuitable company policies and practices such as maternity leave • suitable incentives for women • unsuitable working hours • Organisation structure limits the progression of women through promotion, especially where male hierarchies are entrenched • Organisations may structure work in ways that limit the possibility of women to progress in their career	Morrison, 1992 Wentling, 1992 Rowe & Crafford, 2003 Adair, 1999 Kirai & Mukulu, 2012 Blum, Fields & Goodman, 1994 Rowe & Crafford, 2003	6, 7, 14, 15, 16, 17

Barrier	Characteristics in the workplace	Reference	Interview Question
	• Work that is structured to compel the incumbent to travel regularly may not be suited to most women		
Political game	• Women less likely to play the political game to advance their careers • Women are poor negotiators and generally dislike the negotiation process for capturing organisational power • Women bring distinct personality and motivational strengths to their roles and are more conducive to today's diverse workforce.	Moore, 2006 Nesbit & Seeger, 2007 Wentling, 1992	6,7, 13
Skills of employees/lack of relevant qualifications	• Black women were historical disadvantaged in terms of education and job opportunities. • Women often lack the skills required to secure employment • The EEA still not yet effectively addressing skills shortage among women	Mathur-Helm, 2005:61 Cameli, 2003 Weber, 1991	18
Remuneration	• Women have lower pay than men for the same work	Augusto, 2005	6,7, 20, 21

Barrier	Characteristics in the workplace	Reference	Interview Question
differences	• Female jobs often attract lower pay than male jobs. • Pay used as a vehicle to increase the number of women in management • Pay gap between men and women narrow at entry levels and widens at higher levels • Pay differences result in lack of job satisfaction for women	Millmore et al., 2007 Okpara, 2004; Jamali, 2008.	
Gender stereotypes Perceptions about women	• Women are often viewed as coming to the workplace with inherent deficits that derive from being female • Women's skills are often regarded as lacking • Women regarded as secondary to men • There is a view that women lack of ambition • Men are more supportive to fellow men than women are to fellow women • Some jobs are not as seen as jobs for females (seniors jobs seen as male preserve because of achievement	Heilman, 1997 Rindfleish, 1999 Mathur-Helm, 2005 Still, 2006:188 Mathur-Helm, 2005. Burke, 2008.	6,7, 10,11, 12

Barrier	Characteristics in the workplace	Reference	Interview Question
	orientation, aggression and emotional toughness) • Women generally not yet fully accommodated in the workplace • Women often exposed to prejudice and isolation • Performance standards for women often set higher than their male counterparts • Sometimes women have to deal with adverse conditions such as resentment and hostility of male staff.		
Lack of confidence in performance	• Women lack confidence when perpetually viewed as secondary to men in the workplace • Performance standards of female managers often higher than for male counterparts resulting in women feeling inferior and under pressure to perform • Women lack ambition to be senior managers because of nature of work	Still, 2006 Heilman, 1997	6, 7, 22, 23, 24

Barrier	Characteristics in the workplace	Reference	Interview Question
Balancing career growth and family responsibility	• Women have difficulty in maintaining a balance between family and career. • Business and work ethics are not structured around women's needs. • Women have to make a trade-off between work and other family roles as mothers and wives. • Company policies and practices such as maternity leave and working hours work against career progression of women. • Female values, attitudes, contexts, and life experiences are not incorporated into the concept of traditional careers. • Women are forced to accept long working hours and work stresses in order to manage their careers successfully.	Woodhams, 2008. Bilgel, Ozcakir, Sadikoglu & Aytekin, 2011. Pillai et al. (2011) Lamsa, 2008.	6, 7, 25, 26

2.7 Conclusion

The purpose of this research is to identify the perceived barriers to black women's career advancement in the media industry in South Africa. The reviewed literature shows that women are still underrepresented in senior positions in the media industry. Numerous barriers still exist that impede the advancement of black women. Even though gender empowerment legislation and policies are in place, there is little evidence to show that women are being supported to advance in their careers in South African organisations.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the research design and methodology followed in order to answer the research questions for the study. The qualitative research method was used for this study. The chapter also describes the study sample including the sampling method and sample size. The data collection tools and the content analysis method used to analyse the qualitative data are highlighted. The limitations of the study are also described to determine the extent to which findings can be interpreted. In order to ensure that the research processes and data collected were credible; the chapter defines and indicates how the concepts of reliability and validity were addressed in the study. Finally, the ethical considerations used in the study are described.

3.2 Research design

Research design is the critical process that transforms an idea, interest, or question from 'just a thought' into a meaningful and purposeful investigation of social or physical process (Gatrell, Bierly and Jensen, 2005:1). According to Yin (1991) research design is the logic that links the data collected with initial questions of the research, as well as the action plan that will be followed in order to reach conclusions from the original questions. The research design outlines the methods or techniques used for sampling, data collection, and analysis in order to address the objectives of the research (Gatrell, Bierly & Jensen, 2005).

The design process focuses on guiding the researcher to the following:

- Explain the choice of research methods and sampling techniques;
- Indicate the methodology of the design;
- Indicate how the data will be analysed and rationale for the chosen analytical framework; and
- Define the data management procedures that will applied in the research.

There are various forms of research designs such as experimental, descriptive, causal, and exploratory designs (Jankowicz, 2005: 198-202).

For the purposes of this research a combination of the descriptive and causal research designs were employed. The descriptive design facilitated the collection of information necessary to understand the nature, context and trends in the involvement of women in media. The casual design provided the platform on which to answer the 'why' questions in order to understand the barriers that hinder the advancement of women in the media industry.

3.3 Research methodology

The research methodology forms the foundation of any research project, and details the processes followed in collecting data (Clarke, 2005). According to Polit and Hungler (2004:233), methodology refers to ways of obtaining, organising and analysing data. The research methodology describes the method used to achieve the outcome of this research (Henning, 2004:36). A methodology is merely an operational framework within which facts are placed so that their meaning is clear (Holloway, 2005:293). A sound methodological paradigm is necessary because it directs the entire research study. By using a clear and sound methodology it is possible to interpret data in a manner that meaningful conclusions are drawn and inferences become consistent, reliable and valid. Furthermore, the researcher constituted a panel of HR experts to review the barriers to career advancement identified in the literature review and recommended the top five that would be included in the questionnaire.

3.3.1 Research methods

There are two types of research methods: qualitative and quantitative. Qualitative methods rely on collecting data that is generally not amenable to statistical analysis. Quantitative methods result in numeric data that can manipulated statistically.

3.3.2 Qualitative Research

The study employed a qualitative research approach. Qualitative research offers insight into social, emotional and experiential phenomena (Giacomini, 2000). Leedy and Ormrod (2005) also add that the intent of qualitative research is to answer questions about the complex nature of phenomena, often with the purpose of describing and understanding the phenomena from the participant's point of view. It allows the researcher to test the validity of certain assumptions and provides a means through which a researcher can judge the effectiveness of particular policies, practices and innovations (Leedy, 2005a).

Qualitative research is a systematic, subjective approach used to describe life experiences and give them meaning (Burns & Grove 2003:356; Morse & Field 1996:1999). Qualitative research is mostly associated with words, language and experiences rather than measurements, statistics and numerical figures. In the study researcher sought to understand women's perceptions of the barriers to career advancement in the media industry, based on their own experiences (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005).

Qualitative interviewing provides a framework for participants to speak freely in their own terms about a set of concerns in relation to career advancement experiences of black female managers (Leedy, 2005a).

Qualitative research has the following advantages:

- It studies people in terms of their own definitions of the world (the insider perspective);
- It focuses on the subjective experiences of individuals;
- It is sensitive to the contexts in which people interact with each other (Mouton, 2001b:194); and
- It generates narrative accounts, explanations, typologies of phenomena, conceptual frameworks and the like (Giacomini, 2000).

The qualitative research approach was selected because according to the defining characteristics explained above, the qualitative approach was thought to be appropriate for the following reasons:

- The purpose of the research was to describe and explore;
- The variables are unknown;
- The research was context bound and encompassed personal views;
- The sample size was small; and
- In-depth semi open-ended interviews are to be used to collect data.

3.3.3 Advantages of qualitative research method

Open ended, face-to-face interviews enabled the respondents to describe their careers from their own personal perspectives. The qualitative research methodology used an inductive form of reasoning that developed themes and understanding from patterns in the data (Creswell, 2002).These themes shed light on the research problem, allowing the researcher to gain insights about the barriers to career development encountered by women. Furthermore, qualitative research is useful when participants cannot be observed directly and provide an opportunity for participants to give historical background, and allows researcher control over the line of questioning (Creswell, 2002:186).

In an open ended questionnaire, interviewees answered the questions. They are not constrained by a set of alternatives. The questions generally encourage the respondent to speak more about, and elaborate on, various issues. With open ended questions it is always possible to obtain several variations in answers to similar questions. Ghauri (2002) argues that one cannot get correct answers from respondents when they have to limit their answers. However, the researcher probed on certain questions to gather more insight on the issues. Furthermore, the respondents were open to answering the questions because their anonymity and confidentiality was assured by the researcher.

3.3.4 Disadvantages of qualitative research

One disadvantage of this type of study is that information is filtered through the views of interviewees, lending subjectivity to the responses. Secondly, the presence of the interviewer may bias the responses (Leedy, 2005a). Finn & Jacobson (2008) state that interviews are susceptible to bias, are time consuming and expensive compared to other forms of data collection, and may seem intrusive to the respondent. Moreover, according to Maureen (2000) the articulation of responses will vary, with different weighting and attention to different variables, lending complexity to the research process and analysis.

In addition, the set-up of an interview is not a natural field setting, because interviewees are aware that they are taking part in a study, which can become a limitation. Furthermore, information provided by a respondent is unique as it represents the respondent's own perspective (Creswell, 2002).

Lastly, the disadvantage of open ended interviews is that they demand a skilled and sensitive interviewer. The interviewer had a complete understanding of the research problem, its purpose and information being sought (Ghauri, 2002). Furthermore, the researcher had the necessary skill to analyse and interpret qualitative data (Giacomini, 2000:361).

3.4 Sampling method

According to Saunders, *et al*. (2007:207), sampling methods are grouped under probability or representative sampling and non-probability or judgmental sampling. This study used the non-probability sampling method. In probability sampling each person in the population has the same known probability of being selected. This method increases the likelihood of obtaining samples that are representative of the population (Green, 2010).

With non-probability sampling the chance of selection for each element in the population is unknown and zero for some elements. This approach is suitable

where subjective criteria are used to select elements to constitute a sample (De Vos, 2002). In this instance, only respondents with the required experience to answer the research questions were selected. The questionnaire required the respondent to indicate how long they have been in their current job position, their level of educational and seniority at work; this information was used to ascertain the extent of that respondent's experience in the organisation. This provided the researcher with an indication of the interviewee's career advancement in the organisation.

3.4.1 Target population

A population is a group of elements or cases, whether individuals, objects, or events, that conform to specific criteria, and to which we intend to generalize the results of the research (McMillan &Schumacher, 2006:119). The study population consisted of Black female managers or executives in radio and television at South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC). From the nine provinces in the country the study will focus only on the Gauteng province.

3.4.2 Sample size

A sample refers to the selected elements chosen for participation in a study, and the size is determined by the amount of error the researcher is willing to tolerate. A sample of 20 black female managers was drawn using non-probability sampling. The sample profile is shown in Table 4 below.

Table 2: Sample profile

Description of respondent type- Senior Black Women appointed by EE	**Number to be sampled**
Executive management	5
General manager (senior management)	15

The term "senior" in Table 1 refers to individuals residing on the following types of committees or bodies: Executive committee and Board of directors. The term also

includes managers who report directly to the CEO and managers who have other managers reporting to them (BWASA, 2011).

3.5 Data collection tools

3.5.1 Interviews

A data collection tool is defined as a measurement tool for a research study which has to be reliable and valid (Saunders, *et al.,* 2007:145). For this study a questionnaire with open-ended questions was designed and administered to respondents to explore the specific issues identified as significant barriers in the literature review. The questionnaire is attached in Appendix A.

The questionnaire consisted of three main sections:

- The first section consisted of questions designed to obtain a profile of the sample group that would assist in examining those personal and professional background issues that might shape responses to the main research questions.
- The second section of the questionnaire focussed on questions about the experiences of the respondent. The responses were used to answer the research question on career advancement barriers that respondents have encountered in the organisation.
- The last section consisted of contextual questions aimed at understanding the context in which the respondents operate and that context's influence on the respondent's experiences.

Respondents were allowed to reflect on personal examples and to provide supporting data to their responses.

3.5.2 Procedure for data collection

The researcher first constituted a panel of experts from the human resources department to review the key barriers to career advancement identified in the literature review. These experts provided additional barriers which the researcher

recorded. These experts were then asked to review the final list of barriers with the intention to synthesise these into a few key ones based on their experience in the media industry. Table 3 below illustrates the three barriers identified by the panel of experts.

Table 3: Summary key barriers identified by the panel of experts

Barrier	Explanation
Political game	• Women less likely to play office politics
Skills of employees/lack of relevant qualifications	• Women disadvantaged in terms of education (women seldom have equal qualifications) • Job opportunities -women lagging behind in job related skills
Perceptions about women /balancing career growth and family responsibility	• Women finding difficulty in balancing between family and career • Women being less committed to their careers because primary commitment is family

Following the feedback from the panel of experts, in-depth interviews were conducted with a sample of women who have experienced barriers in their efforts to advance their careers within the SABC. The respondents, including their personal assistants, were contacted initially by telephone, followed by email with attached letter (Appendix A), to inform them of the purpose of the study, subjects to be covered and the research processes, including the duration of the interview.

Upon agreeing to participate in the study the researcher sent further communication to confirm the date, time and location of the interview.

3.6 Data analysis and interpretation

Data analysis is a way of gathering, modelling and transforming data with the aim of highlighting information (Babbie, 2008). According to Neuman (1997), data analysis entails searching the data for patterns and themes that recur.

Qualitative data is all the non-numeric data gathered through the personal interviews. The researcher transcribed and summarised all the data captured from personal interviews. Using content analysis method the information was compressed and categorised according to emerging themes that are meaningful and that answered the research questions. Leedy and Ormrod (2005a) describe content analysis as a detailed and systematic examination of the contents of a particular body of material for the purpose of identifying patterns, themes, or biases.

The open ended interviews were used to gain insight into the barriers encountered by black women managers in relation to career advancement. The interviews were supplemented with informal discussions with respondents to provide more insights.

The questions in the questionnaire were grouped in terms of themes. Content analysis was performed by analysing and examining, organising, combining and categorising the patterns in such a way that the research questions are answered. This cycle was repeated until there was no further incremental contribution to the research.

The information collected from interviews was compared with issues that emerged in the literature review to either confirm or challenge the information, perceptions and impressions that were drawn from the literature review. It may also happen that information obtained from the interviews would reveal new issues and concepts that were not included in the study. The researcher then probed on these issues which were then incorporated into the report.

3.7 Limitations of the study

The study focuses only on the media industry and interviewees were selected using non probability sampling, a technique that does not allow for random samples to generalise to the population (Creswell, 2002).

The researcher is in the same industry as the respondents and they may not feel at ease in discussing aspects of their lives with the researcher and possibly introduce bias. Serrant-Green (2002) states that respondents feel much more at ease with strangers who are not part of their social circle, than with those with whom they might interact with at other times.

3.8 Validity and reliability

The validity of a measurement is the extent to which the instrument measures what it is supposed to measure (Leedy, 2005a:28). The study measured social interactions and their meaning. Qualitative insights must emerge from systematic observations and competent interpretation. Also, they must correspond well to the social reality experienced by the participants and must have meaning for those who will read and learn from the report (Giacomini, 2000).

3.8.1 External validity

External validity threats arise when the research draws incorrect inferences from the sample data which are extrapolated to other persons, other things, and from past to future situations (Creswell, 2002).

3.8.2 Internal validity

Internal validity threats relate to research procedures, treatments or experiences of the participants that threaten the researcher's ability to draw correct inferences from the data (Creswell, 2002). Internal validity refers to the extent to which the instrument allows inferences about the causal relationships between data elements (Leedy, 2001). Therefore, internal validity is more relevant in studies that

try and establish a causal relationship such as this one where barriers which hinder career development are identified.

3.8.3 Reliability

Reliability is defined as the extent to which similar research conducted in future will result in similar outcomes (Leedy, 2001). Reliability was achieved by using in-depth interviews in which views expressed were probed and confirmed. The researcher was able to probe on certain questions, whenever necessary, further providing more detail for the study.

3.9 Ethical considerations

According to Polit and Beck (2010), researchers must deal with ethical issues when their intended research involves human beings. The researcher asked and was granted permission to conduct the research study with the respondents.

The researcher was also aware that research must be designed in such a manner that the respondent does not suffer physical harm, discomfort, pain, embarrassment or loss of privacy (Blumberg, et al., 2005:156). Furthermore, the researcher complied with the five ethical concerns in conducting research: consent, privacy, consequentiality, harm, and confidentiality and anonymity (Henn, Weinstein & Foard (2009:80).

3.9.1 Anonymity and confidentiality

The main ethical principles that were considered during the study were respect for persons and confidentiality. The researcher committed to provide feedback to the respondents but not to any third parties that were not involved during the research. The respondents name was not used and the audiotapes were kept safe and no third party had access to them other than the researcher. All audios and their transcripts were saved and password protected. Some sensitive information was not recorded at the request of the respondents. Participants were assured that only the researcher and the researcher's supervisor will have access

to the data and that the audiotapes would be destroyed once the study was completed.

3.9.2 Informed consent

All the respondents selected for personal interviews were informed of the purpose of the research prior to commencing the interviews. In all cases participants were free to abort the interview should they decided to do so. The participants were notified in advance, which provided them with ample time to ask questions for clarification regarding the research. The researcher encouraged voluntary participation and did not coerce any participants. The researcher informed and requested the respondents to sign the ethical approval form.

3.10 Conclusion

This chapter examined the research design and methodology. A combination of the descriptive and causal research designs was adopted to guide the research. Since the study adopted the qualitative research method, this was discussed in detail highlighting both the advantages and disadvantages of using this method. The study sample was described as well as the sampling method. The questionnaire used, which is the chosen data collection tool was described and highlighted the type of questions asked to solicit information from respondents. The analysis of qualitative data through the content analysis method was described including the interpretation of such data. The limitations of the research study were clearly delineated and the strategies to ensure reliability and validity of both the research process and research instrument confirmed. The chapter concludes with a description of the ethical considerations that were observed in research.

In the next chapter the data collected during the research study is analysed, interpreted and research findings presented.

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the findings from the study based on the analysis of the data collected through in-depth open ended interviews, conducted with 20 black female managers within SABC. The findings are presented in accordance to the research questions to determine the extent to which these have been answered.

This chapter commences with highlighting the demographic profiles of the respondents. This is followed by a discussion of the barriers to career development experienced by women in the media industry. Finally, this chapter discusses the initiatives that can be implemented to leverage women's career development and improve their status in the workplace.

4.2 Profile of respondents

This section of the questionnaire was intended to address any factors in the respondents' profiles that might give insights to the interview questions. The following factors were used to establish background profiles and determine how these might influence career development.

4.2.1 The age band

The highest percentage (33%) of respondents was in both the 35 – 40 age group and those older than 55 years (Table 4). This would mean the younger female managers are advancing their careers faster due to educational attainment, whilst those over 55 years are more likely to advance into senior positions based on their work experience.

Table 4: Age demographics of respondents

Personal and Professional Demographics	Percentage of Respondants
Age	
<34	0%
35-40	33%
41-45	17%
46-54	17%
>55	33%

4.2.2 Respondents living with children under 21 years

The majority (83%) of the respondents indicated that they live with children who are under the age of 21. This indicates that most respondents have to balance family responsibilities and a full time career.

4.2.3 Highest education attained

Most respondents (66%) had either a professional or post graduate qualification. All of the respondents had a graduate level or professional qualification which suggested that education is a key factor that can leverage women to advance their careers.

Table 5: Education level of Respondents

Education (Highest level attained)	Percentage
Senior High school certificate	0.00%
Bachelors Degree	33.33%
Post Graduate Degree	33.33%
Professional (CA, CFA, IMM)	33.33%
Other (PhD)	0.00%

4.2.5 **Management level**

Of the 20 respondents interviewed 15 (73%) were in senior management (Table 7). Only 5 were in executive management. However, both levels of management indicate significant career advancement by women in the media industry.

Table 6: Management level

Perceived Level	
Executive management	27%
Senior management	73%

4.2.6 Length of time in management

Most (67%) of the managers had more than five years' experience in senior management according to the study findings in Table 7 below. This finding suggests that these black female managers had advanced their careers through their organisations much earlier.

Table 7: Period in senior Management

No of years in Senior Management	
<1 year	0%
1 to 3 years	33%
3 to 5 years	0%
More than 5 years	67%

4.3 Barriers to career advancement

This section is presented in accordance with the themes that were drawn from the literature review. The research questions are presented and analysed in order to either validate or refute the findings collated from literature review. This section presents and discusses the barriers to career advancement identified by the respondents. Table 8 below presents the barriers to career advancement and draws the main theme as identified by each respondent. The table further provides recommendations to address the identified barriers.

Table 8: Barriers to career advancement of black women in the media industry

Respondent	Summary of main issues raised by Respondents
Respondent 1	Barriers • "There are inexplicable reasons that prevented me from advancing in my career even though I had the relevant credentials". • "My white colleagues did not view me as an equal and able contributor in the work place as a result of racial discrimination". • "My skills were often questioned and I had to work harder to prove my worth". Main theme Despite their efforts, black career women require a change of perception and support from their peers as a condition for success Recommendations • Black women need to continue up-skilling themselves to break the glass ceiling • Gender equality in the work place should be promoted further to acknowledge female colleagues on the same footing with males.
Respondent 2	Barriers • "Despite working harder than male colleagues there were always barriers in being recognized and assisted to advance in my career". • "The abiding perception that men are superior to women in the work place placed a cap on how high I could rise in my career". Main theme Black career women face a glass ceiling that is made up of a plethora of barriers Recommendations • Top management must make deliberate efforts to remove the glass ceiling • Male counterparties should perceive the support for women as correcting traditional imbalances in the work place as opposed to seeing it as favouritism

Respondent	Summary of main issues raised by Respondents
Respondent 3	Barriers • Work performance discredited through racial discrimination thereby blocking career advancement • Sexual harassment in the work place inhibited career advancement Main theme Black career women face sexual harassment that contributes to diminishing her self-confidence as an able contributor. Recommendations • Policies and procedures to deal with racial harassment must be implemented effectively • All employees must be made aware of the consequences of perpetuating racial and ethnic harassment • No one in the work place should be disadvantaged on the basis of gender, language, religion and family background
Respondent 4	Barriers • "Owing to the demands of work projects balancing work and family responsibility has always been very challenging". • Isolated as certain groups have private luncheons and meetings • Wage differentials with colleagues in the same bracket Main theme Women face a multiplicity of barriers that require top management to commit to address Recommendations • Top management must make deliberate efforts to accept and support the work-family facilitation concept • The environment becomes rather unsupportive at times • Remuneration should not be based on gender and race but rather on performance and competence
Respondent 5	Barriers • "Balancing family responsibilities as a mother and a wife with work and study was very challenging". • "Racial stereotypes expressed in the work place limited my chances of progressing in my careers".

Respondent	Summary of main issues raised by Respondents
	• Beliefs and attitudes that a black woman could not study and work at the same time and excelling. <u>Main theme</u> Black career women face barriers balancing work, study and family duties thereby limiting their career advancement <u>Recommendations</u> • Work place practices should be reviewed to accommodate the unique needs of women • Policies and procedures to address gender and racial discrimination should be implemented to protect black women
Respondent 6	<u>Barriers</u> • "Lacked mentorship as a young black female professional because of the need to maintain the status quo by white colleagues". • "Denied promotion due racial stereotypes and had to work to prove my competence". • Unbalanced reward structures which favour white colleagues and black males than black females • Balancing work travel and family responsibilities very difficult hence the tendency not to take those kinds of opportunities <u>Main theme</u> Black women have to be savvy and find mentors to help them to navigate the male dominated workplace and be recognised as capable <u>Recommendations</u> • Training and mentorship opportunities should be offered to deserving employees on an equal basis • One has to be strategic and diplomatic in approaching mentors for guidance and continue to build the mentoring relationship • Gender stereotypes from black men as well particularly when there are opportunities for career advancement • Both black and white female professionals should receive similar benefits and flexi-working arrangements without prejudice • Office politics where black females are forced to endorse

Respondent	Summary of main issues raised by Respondents
	decisions made by superior male colleagues or be pressured to leave • Lack of support from other women in the workplace • Performance reviews and promotion policies exist in the organisation but not implemented for black women who still have to fight for their advancement • A female mentor who has walked the same path seems to be more effective as they understand the barriers faced by women in the work place • A male mentor helped to understand how to navigate a male dominated workplace • Performance doubted for black females and in some cases the women become less confident of their own performance
Respondent 7	<u>Barriers</u> • "There was preferential treatment in the work place that isolated me and made my work difficult". • "Constantly being challenged and caught between office politics being promoted from the regional office over colleagues at head office". • Job pressure from peers and superiors to perform and excel • "At some point felt that I was not ready for a senior job". <u>Main theme</u> Black women tend to be isolated in the workplace through preferential treatment of male colleagues and women have to work twice as hard to be recognised. <u>Recommendations</u> • Equality in the work place should prevail regardless of gender or race • Management should sensitise all employees to enable black women to receive necessary support when they are promoted • Work load and performance measurement should not be biased against gender and race
Respondent 8	<u>Barriers</u> • "Career advancement was a challenge for me for unexplained reasons even with the appropriate qualifications". • "Experienced racial discrimination dealing with supplier's in IT

Respondent	Summary of main issues raised by Respondents
	industry which is still predominately a white male industry". • "Sacrificed family for career, as a single parent I needed to take my son to boarding school to be able to further my studies and take a challenging job, balancing career with family responsibilities is one of the main barriers". • "Educational background the main barrier as I am in IT, lack of relevant qualifications". <u>Main theme</u> The glass ceiling still exists for most women alongside racial stereotypes which combine to limit career advancement of black women <u>Recommendations</u> • Promotion criteria and procedures should be clearly articulated to enable fairness • Work places must be sensitive to family-work demands in order to fully benefit from the contribution of female employees • Black career women should focus on being skilled in their areas of operation.
Respondent 9	<u>Barrier</u> • "The glass ceiling phenomenon exists for me because my career advancement has been slow because of all these reasons unrelated to skill and work performance". • "Office politics and a lack of confidence in my performance by male and white colleagues was a barrier for me". • "Experienced gender and race discrimination in the boardroom". • "Salary gap was demotivating as I had to work harder than male and white colleagues and still get paid less". <u>Main theme</u> Black career women need to be supported in order to amplify their voices and demand equal opportunities to advance their careers. <u>Recommendations</u> • The work environment should be professional and limit office politics and other distractions • The campaign for equal pay regardless of gender and race

Respondent	Summary of main issues raised by Respondents
	should be taken seriously by management. • Women should be supported to compete with male colleagues on an equal footing.
Respondent 10	<u>Barriers</u> • "Most of my barriers were due to family responsibilities, due to my role as a wife, I could not put the hours needed at work to prove myself". • "Lacked confidence in my role as I had not been exposed to management and had been in support positions that are less demanding". • "Faced gender discrimination as black men brought cultural gender perceptions into the work place where as a woman your career comes secondary to that of your husband". • "Balancing career with family responsibilities is one of the main barriers ,Had to sacrifice taking a job in KZN where I would grow , as I did not want to destabilise my daughters education". <u>Main theme</u> Black career women are often forced to sacrifice family in order to advance their careers. <u>Recommendations</u> • The patriarchal practices should not be permitted into the work place as they work against women. • Provide management training programmes designed for women to level the playing field in the work place • Provide flexi-time work arrangements that support women and enable them to create a healthy work-family balance.
Respondent 11	<u>Barriers</u> • "Became very senior at a young age, and the politics was my greatest barrier". • "Lack of confidence in my performance by my colleagues because I was younger than most executives and was deemed to be in experienced. My mentor assisted me to overcome". • "Balancing career with family responsibilities is one of the main barriers. I had to sacrifice family to advance my career". • "My salary was lower than my male colleagues in the organisation and in the industry as a chartered accountant".

Respondent	Summary of main issues raised by Respondents
	Main theme Mentorship is critical for managing office politics and other work-related barriers that might stall career advancement Recommendations • Rapid career advancement should be accompanied by strong mentorship programme in the workplace. • The workplace has to be restructured to accommodate women without putting undue pressure on them. • Remuneration should always be based on competence rather than gender and racial stereotypes.
Respondent 12	Barriers • "Barriers of getting married soon and having children interfered with career progress. I had to sacrifice the family in order not to miss opportunities and be recognised". • "Poor educational background and exposure was a major barrier as this tended to make me conservative in the workplace and find it difficult to network professionally". • "As a black female there was pressure to perform and yet white women at the same level had it easier and were paid more". • "Gender discrimination on black females from black men as a result of cultural perceptions of gender. But white females are more respected by black males. They are treated differently by black men on the basis that they do not understand African culture". • "Office politics especially in the boardroom because certain characters are seeking recognition and power. When you are soft and accommodative sometimes colleagues take advantage of you". Main theme Black women often start off without a strong career orientation and thus as a result of poor career management they tend to progress slowly. Recommendations • Black females have to take a deliberate approach to managing their careers in order to make significant progress

Respondent	Summary of main issues raised by Respondents
	• Black females should actively network with other professionals in order to have the necessary exposure in the industry.
Respondent 13	<u>Barriers</u> • "There is still a perception that black females do not perform at the same level as their male colleagues on the same tasks. This perception can diminish your confidence over time". • "There are barriers when you have to sell your idea. You have to play the office politics to get through with your ideas and decisions". • "Black females allocated tougher work than white females and yet remuneration is much less for black women". • "Family responsibilities sometimes force you to choose family over your career. The expectations at home can burden you and prevent any progress whether to study or take challenging roles". <u>Main theme</u> Gender and racial stereotypes are still evident in the workplace and women have to be tough in order to survive. <u>Recommendations</u> • The workplace should be levelled to enable black women with bright ideas to have the same opportunity as men to pitch. • Remuneration should be fair otherwise most black females get frustrated and leave • Performance management must be implemented regardless of gender and race.
Respondent 14	<u>Barriers</u> • White women more influential than black females and black female are always being second guessed. • "I had to be aggressive to deal with the office politics because everyone is trying to position themselves. Sometimes meetings are taken out of the office and you are isolated". • "It was very hard to pursue studies and work at the same time. So either you sacrifice your work or your family. And these choices are never easy". <u>Main theme</u>

Respondent	Summary of main issues raised by Respondents
	Black career women tend to be micro-managed and their work securitised much more than their counterparts <u>Recommendations</u> • Management should ensure that important issues are discussed within the office during established working hours • Black career women should be given the space to prove themselves without being micro-managed
Respondent 15	<u>Barriers</u> • "You can see that they have no confidence in your work as a black person and as a woman. As a result you have to work twice as hard as the male colleagues". • "Women have to fight and stand up for themselves to survive in the workplace. The politics is open and you know they don't want you in senior management". • "Ofcourse it's always difficult being a mother, wife and working full time. One area is always going to suffer. Unfortunately, career suffers especially when you start having children". <u>Main theme</u> Black career women are more likely lose confidence in themselves and their work as a result of undue pressure on them to perform beyond performance management measures set for other employees. <u>Recommendations</u> • Women should be equipped with the necessary knowledge to protect themselves from discrimination in the work place
Respondent 16	<u>Barriers</u> • "Men bring gender stereotypes to work. You are expected to be in supporting roles because they would not take orders from a woman". • "The office environment can be hostile as people look out for themselves. You end up being forced to act like a man to win the office politics". • "The salary gap is always there even for the same work. When you complain you get a bigger workload and now you have to work harder to prove that you are worthy of the remuneration

Respondent	Summary of main issues raised by Respondents
	you demand". Main theme Black female professionals have to deal with pressures at work and at home challenging them to toughen up and act like men. Recommendations • All employees should be trained in gender issues in order to understand the significance of supporting women. • Women should invest in their careers and be able to engage strategically in the workplace in order to advance their careers.
Respondent 17	Barriers • "Racial discrimination and gender stereotypes still prevail even though we have legislation against it. Sometimes it is subtle but we know it is there". • "The politics in the office happens and always get selected ahead of you and are paid better. I have to fight and sometimes it becomes unprofessional but there is no other way". • "The family always comes with responsibilities and work becomes secondary. It's always hard to put the career ahead if family". Main theme Black female managers face a multitude of barriers within the workplace resulting in them having to fight back in order to be taken seriously. Recommendations • Level the workplace to ensure that performance management is transparent and fair. • Black female managers have to develop coping strategies in order to survive in the workplace.
Respondent 18	Barriers • "We come from a history where the workplace was dominated by men. Although there are more women now, men are still in control". • "What is frustrating most is working very hard and still being paid less than your male counterparts for the same type of

Respondent	Summary of main issues raised by Respondents
	work". Main theme Black female managers have to struggle to be noticed, be rewarded accordingly and be supported in their careers. Recommendations • Mentorship opportunities could provide women with more effective ways of dealing with barriers in the workplace. • Black women should to upskill themselves so that they always prepared for emerging opportunities.
Respondent 19	Barriers • "Some of the black men still believe that women are inferior and they do not accept orders from a black woman even though they have no problems reporting to a white female". • "When you do not have mentors, it's hard making the right choices for your career. So you end up doubting yourself and losing confidence. Eventually you settle for less challenging roles". • "Sometimes men have their own 'boys club' outside the office where work decisions are made. As a woman you are excluded from such gatherings. So you have no choice but to play the politics". Main theme Black female managers settle for less challenging positions as a compromise to having to deal with work related barriers and politics. Recommendations • Develop management development programmes to support women in the workplace • Ensure that all important meetings are conducted during working hours
Respondent 20	Barriers • "There have been moments when I did not know why I was not selected for certain opportunities even if I had the required qualifications and work experience. Certainly the glass ceiling exists for women in the industry".

Respondent	Summary of main issues raised by Respondents
	• "As a woman when you get married family responsibilities become a priority for most of the time. There is an expectation that women will take time away from work to raise the family. Meanwhile the males advance in their careers". • "There are racial remarks sometimes and the work environment does not support you of you raise these issues. But we know that white women tend to have more privileges than black females". <u>Main theme</u> It does not matter how hard you work and how good the deliverables are, the pay levels always indicate that the contribution made by women in the workplace is downplayed. <u>Recommendations</u> • Do not shy away from the office politics otherwise you do not make any headway in your career. • Network with other professionals to learn how to manage the workplace.

Having presented a summary of responses from respondents in Table 8 above, the next section presents these responses in terms of themes identified in literature.

4.3.1 The glass ceiling as a barrier to career advancement for black women

Ninety percent (18 out of 20) of the respondents indicated that black women in the media industry often struggle to advance their careers to higher levels. One of the major impediments mentioned is the existence of the glass ceiling. The respondents felt that no matter how qualified they were there is always a limit to how high they can rise in the workplace. The glass ceiling typically affects female managers especially in the in middle and senior management levels. All the respondents felt that the historical factors that discriminated against women in the workplace are also contributing towards curtailing the career advancement of women.

Respondent 9 noted that:
“The glass ceiling phenomenon exists for me, because my career advancement has been slow for reasons unrelated to skill and work performance.”

Respondent 8 had this to say:
“The glass ceiling effect exists because even with the appropriate qualification, career advancement was still a challenge for me for unexplained reasons.”

Respondent 9 captured this sentiment when she stated that:
“Due to barriers that you face, you need to prove yourself to break the ceiling. Immediately when you utter a word in the boardroom, they are looking for fault in what you are saying, and you can feel that is not about what you are saying, but about confidence in you as a person”.

Respondent 2 indicated that:
“The glass ceiling will remain for many black women as long as organisations senior management and resources remain under the control of men. Very few women would be able to navigate the career path especially in organisations where male dominance is still intact.”

Respondent 2 further added that:
“*Black career women face a glass ceiling that is made up of a plethora of barriers and the EE programmes being implemented have a chance of helping women to break this glass ceiling in some organisations.”*

Respondent 20 had this to say regarding the glass ceiling phenomenon:
“There have been moments when I did not know why I was not selected for certain opportunities even if I had the required qualifications and work experience. Certainly the glass ceiling exists for women in the industry.”

All the respondents agreed that the glass ceiling was real and they have at one time or the other experienced inexplicable resistance as they tried to advance their careers into senior ranks. These perceptions are well suited with the definition of glass ceiling cited in the literature which states that the glass ceiling is a term which symbolises a variety of barriers faced by women, minorities and disadvantaged groups as they seek to improve their employment status (Adair, 1999). Various studies have also found that even when the organisational environment is supportive to women there are always other pressures that will hinder their advancement into senior ranks (Hewlett, 2002; Parsadh, 2001).

Findings support theory by Adair (1999) that the glass ceiling metaphor is also extended to barriers faced by minorities and disadvantaged groups that keep them from rising to upper ranks of the corporate ladder, despite their qualifications and achievements.

The findings further support the theory by Mathur-Helm (2006:311) that states that the glass ceiling effect “refers to the failure of women and other minority groups in climbing the corporate ladder despite seeing the top jobs, but still not reaching them due to discriminatory barriers”.

The current study demonstrates that the glass ceiling exists and remains a challenge for women. Although there have been cases of highly successful women in the media, these have been very few and isolated.

4.3.2 Racial discrimination as a barrier to career advancement

Most respondents felt that there was still racial discrimination in the workplace, although black women have found coping strategies over time to deal with these barriers. However, according to Respondent 5:

“Racial stereotypes expressed in the work place limit women from making progress in their careers”

According to Respondent 6:

"Racial stereotypes lead to young black professionals not being given training opportunities. This is because young black females are perceived as a threat to the old white male and female employees who want to maintain the status quo"

Respondent 1 expressed her view as follows"

"Colleagues and peers of different colour need to start viewing me as an equal and able contributor. The White era has gone and White men need to adapt to that and manage their Black female counterparts based on competence."

The respondents felt that they had to prove themselves to their White colleagues in order to progress in their careers. Most respondents quoted the number of years that they had been in management and also cited the number of years that EE policies have been in place to demonstrate the time that it has taken to achieve this level of confidence. The demographics of the respondents showed that 67% of Black female managers had been in senior management for more than five years. Thus, most of the respondents had a considerable amount of experience at that level. This would presumably help them to prove themselves to their White colleagues and hence gain credibility.

Respondent 17 had this to say:

"Racial discrimination still prevails even though we have legislation against it. Sometimes it is subtle but we know it is there."

However, there were a few respondents (8 out of 20) who felt that they had been victims of racial discrimination when dealing with clients and suppliers outside their organisations, which may have delayed some of their projects, this hampered performance leading to poor career growth .

Respondent 8 captured the essence of this when she stated that:

“I was lucky to have a White man as a mentor, and he paved the way for me with external suppliers, as the technology industry was not a space for Black women.”

Even though organisations realise that racial discrimination is happening, at times there is little that is done indicating a desire to maintain the status quo. This was captured by Respondent 3 as follows:

“Policies and procedures to deal with racial and ethnic harassment exist in organisations, but are not fully practised. Deliberate efforts to deal with racial harassment must be seen to be effective.”

However, not all respondents agreed to the view that racial discrimination is a barrier to career advancement for black women. A few respondents felt that their chances of advancement were equal to their white colleagues. They felt that it does not matter whether you are black or white when it comes to career advancement in the workplace. For them the gender dimension was more pronounced. This was articulated by Respondent 8 as follows:

“Discrimination is in the eyes of the beholder, you basically get what you perceive. If you feel sorry about where you have progressed to as a Black woman, and have no confidence in your decisions, then White counterparts will also have no confidence in your decisions.”

In a broad sense, the foregoing still indicates that racial discrimination is still occurring and affecting black women in advancing their careers. This finding is supported by previous research that indicates that the workplace culture in South Africa discriminates on the basis of race and gender (Mathur-Helm, 2005:61). This discrimination has resulted in the career advancement of black women being constrained (Parsadh, 2001). Therefore there is still need to level out the workplace to enable the advancement of women without undue discrimination based on race.

4.3.3 Gender discrimination as a barrier to career advancement

The literature review explored the attitudes encountered by female professionals in the workplace. For example, the literature review cited a study by Price (2002) in which the women interviewed felt that they had to prove themselves not only to the employer, but also to their male colleagues, as men held deep seated attitudes that women would not be successful in the construction industry.

The study findings validated this sentiment as was indicated through Respondent 9 who stated it as follows:

"In the boardroom you cannot give an excuse that you are new in this field, you are expected to perform at the same level as men who have been there long before you. So as a woman you need to work twice as hard to achieve the confidence and this you have to do for your own sake, firstly because we are new in this senior management, and secondly because you need to prove yourself to your male colleagues."

Respondents stated that they have found themselves victims of gender discrimination from their male colleagues at times. Gender discrimination by colleagues was found to have an influence on career advancement of women into management level.

Respondent 10 affirmed this by stating that:

"Our Black men feel that women must be the neck, and they are the head (meaning that women should be the support function and men should lead), even when we are at work, they tend to forget that now we are colleagues. This is a black family culture that will take long to be managed in the corporate environment".

According to Mathur-Helm (2005:56), men in South African organisations seem to resist accepting women "as professional equals". This makes gender discrimination a factor that hinders the advancement of women in the careers.

This assertion seems to be stronger in black culture than in white culture because black African culture is traditionally patriarchal.

According to Respondent 19:
"Some of the black men still believe that women are inferior and they do not accept orders from a black woman even though they have no problems reporting to a white female."

Most women (13 out of 20) felt that the discrimination was not only from black males, but from males in general, as some white men would be more supportive towards black men than black women.

This point was expressed by Respondent 9 as follows:

"The fact that black men have been in strategic positions before black women works to their advantage in making their male white colleagues have confidence in their decisions, however those black men do not have confidence in their black female counterparts."

This assertion supports the notion that male attitudes towards women hinder the career advancement of women (Heilman, 2001). A study by Still (2006) found that women have not broken into senior management ranks in significant numbers. Still (2006) suggests that the prevailing culture and lack of acceptance of women professionals are two factors that have caused this delay. The study found that previously, white males dominated the workplace in senior management levels.

In conclusion, the attitudes that women encountered from their colleagues were found to frustrate the career advancement ambitions of black female professionals and put them under pressure to perform harder than their male counterparts. Although women are advantaged by affirmative action they also experience gender discrimination. This means that, owing to the fact that there are fewer women in senior management levels the likelihood that female candidates will be chosen over men is higher.

4.3.4 Perceived lack of skills and knowledge as a barrier to career advancement

The literature highlights that black women come from a historical background where they were disadvantaged in terms of education and job opportunities; this led to EE policies such as the EEA. Hiring women under the EEA has raised the issue of whether EE hires are less qualified than other candidates for a job.

Holzer and Neumark (1999) state that minority employees hired as a result of AA policies have lower educational attainment. The respondents all had at least a first degree or the professional equivalent, so it is evident that even though 15 out of the 20 respondents were AA appointments, the education levels of the employees were not compromised. Although AA is important in assisting women to advance their careers, this was not a key focus area for the research. However, it can be concluded here that the respondents possessed relevant qualifications for the positions for which they were appointed to.

Companies are more concerned with achieving results than meeting EE statistics. This supports what Holzer (1999) found in his study on whether EE hires are less qualified individuals; he concluded that AA redistributes employment away from white men towards minorities but there is no substitution of less-able women or minorities for more-able white male workers.

The literature also suggests that because women were disadvantaged in terms of education, they need time and experience to advance their careers and also reach executive positions. The research contradicted this; instead, it was found that women advanced their careers too rapidly into senior positions and their work experience was not sufficient for the positions they held. Research found that 50% of the respondents were under the age of 45 and this refutes the assertion that women need long service to advance to strategic management ranks. The black female managers were appointed into these positions because of their skills and not their experience.

Respondent 9 affirmed this when she stated:

“I think we get sound contribution from our older executives. You can feel their experience in the boardroom rather than our younger colleagues where you can tell that they are still in the trial and error stage”.

Some of the respondents felt that the transition for some executives into senior management positions as their careers advanced was too rapid. Their knowledge and skills were not enough to provide the expected performance and a slower transition was needed. Respondent 7 expressed her experience as follows:

“I have had to fight to demonstrate competence and to get ahead. At some point I felt that I was not ready for a senior job.”

Respondent 11 also expressed her experience as follows:

“I became very senior at a young age, and the politics was my greatest barrier”

Respondent 9 contributed to this assertion by stating that:

“We cannot run away from the fact that men have been there longer, especially white men, but one needs to get the necessary skills and support to bridge this gap, as EE has given us the opportunity to participate in management: the ball is now in our court”.

The respondents felt that black women lacked the experience of being in senior management positions but once they had gathered adequate experience, the assertion of men doing this better than women was disproved.

Due to frequent job changes by some of the younger managers, they were not able to cement their learning properly before moving upward on the corporate ladder. They felt that mentoring and support was needed to assist managers that

had progressed too rapidly into senior positions. Skills were not a barrier for the black female managers in the research study. What emerged to be critical was the experience to function in senior management thus justifying the need for mentoring and support.

4.4.5 Differences in remuneration as a barrier to career advancement

Okpara (2004) states that salary differentials exist between men and women in many countries and that personal factors such as gender, education, experience and level of management may be responsible for these differences in salary. Jamila (2008) adds that the workplace has made significant strides in terms of increased labour force participation and higher literacy levels but has not made much growth in pay levels. Remuneration differences based on gender limit the opportunities of women to aspire to advance further in their careers as income is a major motivating factor (Millmore et al., 2007).

Remuneration was seen as a concern and not a barrier to the respondents. Respondent 6 pointed out the following:

"There exist unbalanced reward structures which favour white colleagues and black males than black females in organisations."

This was corroborated by Respondent 11 who expressed her experiences as follows:

"My pay was lower than my male colleagues, in the organisation and in the industry. As a CA I was not paid the same as male CAs."

Furthermore, Respondent 11 indicated that:
"I consider the remuneration package when offered a challenging or executive position because I know the pressure to excel will be high. Therefore the remuneration should also be high."

It is generally evident that when compared to male counterparts on the issue of remuneration, male employees were found to be paid more and that women considered the pay in relation to the job pressure when considering taking a new job.

This according to Respondent 9 is frustrating:

"The pay gap is demotivating in career advancement because you know you have to work hard to prove yourself and still get paid less than your white and male counterparts."

This assertion is in line with Millmore et al. (2007) who indicate differences in remuneration based on gender demotivate women. Furthermore, Louie (2013) indicates that raises and promotions are great motivators for career advancement as they demonstrate acknowledgement of accomplishments.

When women are not paid correct salaries, they are inclined to disengage with the organisation. The low salaries also mean that their progress in the organisation might be slower resulting in them leaving these organisations. Salaries only become unfair when the differences between male and female employees are unjustified and disproportionately favour men and they may affect the aspirations of women to advance further their careers.

Although 11 out of 20 raised a concern that they are paid less than their male counterparts, remuneration was not considered as a barrier as it did not affect their desire to advance their careers.

4.4.6 Stereotypes as barriers to career advancement

One of the three main barriers that women encounter is the stereotypes that exist about women and about the workplace. A job of a manager is seen as a male

preserve because achievement oriented aggression and emotional toughness are seen as male characteristics (Heilman, 1997).

Respondent 10 captured this view as follows:

"Some of our barriers as women are cultural, as a married woman you need to make decisions about your career that support your husband's goals, and then when you are at work, our black male colleagues do not see you as equals, as your function at home is a support one"

The above statement captured the essence that the gender roles defined by black women's culture become a hindrance in those women's participation in career advancement.

Respondent 10 added that:

"You cannot have confidence in something you have not been exposed to; our white male colleagues have not been exposed to working with black women in management let alone good performance from black women".

It can be stated that because women have no track record in management, this lack of a track record is a factor that causes scepticism about their performance in senior management roles.

The literature highlights that one of the factors that inhibits the advancement of women has been the societal norms relating to appropriate gender roles. In a study in the United States, it was found that both men and women tend to believe that because women were raised differently, they must manage differently. The role of a woman is not seen as fitting into the corporate environment and in contrast, women have been viewed mostly in terms of their roles as mothers and

caretakers. The research concludes that stereotypes in the workplace create a barrier to career advancement for black female managers.

4.4.7 Perceptions about job performance as a barrier to career advancement

The literature states that one important factor affecting the career advancement of women is male scepticism about the performance of women professionals. Heilman, Block & Stathatos (1997) found that there is a commonly accepted view that men do a better job than women in leadership roles in the organisation.

Respondent 11 expressed the following sentiments:
"There was a lack of confidence in my performance from my colleagues because I was younger than most executives and was deemed to be in experienced. However, the mentor assisted me a lot to overcome this."

Heilman's (1997) study provided evidence that stereotypic thinking can unfairly obstruct the advancement of women to top management and executive level positions. Most women felt that there is pressure to perform, as legislation has put women in the limelight for scrutiny.

According to Respondent 6:

"When your performance is doubted as a black female you may become less confident of your own performance. This presents a barrier in career development."

These sentiments were echoed by Respondent 9 who said the following:

"Lack of confidence in performance was a barrier for me; there was lack of confidence in me as a black manager from male and white colleagues."

Heilman et al. (1997) also add that men are task focused and ensure that the job is complete, as opposed to women who are interpersonally focused. According to Heilman (2001) a job of a manager is seen as a male preserve because achievement, oriented aggression and emotional toughness are seen as male characteristics. Traditionally, women have been in positions that require soft skills such as human resources and marketing. They tend to be new players in management and need experience from other women who have walked this route. All respondents emphasised that they cannot ignore the challenge of lacking the experience required of senior managers within their organisations.

The management style that women use to manage is seen to be different from the traditional style of management and this difference is then perceived negatively as an inability to perform as far as black women are concerned. From the individual responses, common patterns emerge that show that perceptions of men about women, experience and the different management styles of men and women are barriers that affect the advancement of women in their careers.

Respondent 9 had this to say:

"Managing by aggression and emotional toughness is a male management style, but this does not mean it is the only effective one. Women are soft spoken and empathetic but can still use these skills to lead and support employees."

The foregoing indicates that although women competently perform in their roles in the workplace, males have a bias that they perform better than females. According to 8 out of 20 women this perception results in black women losing confidence in their own performance and missing out on opportunities to take on more senior and challenging roles to develop their careers. As such for this study it was not considered as a major barrier.

4.4.8 Balancing career growth and family responsibility as a barrier to career advancement

The participants reported a conflict between family responsibility and the demands of a senior position and this conflict presented itself as a barrier. Most of the respondents expressed concern about having to fulfil roles that sometimes conflict. They had to juggle the responsibilities of being a manager, as well as family responsibilities such as marriage, children, and extended family. The respondents felt that they have to perform well at work especially if they want to progress. When they get home, they also have to fulfil other roles such as being mothers, wives or doing household chores.

According to Respondent 10:

"Most of my barriers were due to family responsibilities, due to my role as a wife. I could not put the hours needed at work to prove myself and my role as a mother, and I could not make sacrifices that would compromise my children."

A study by Burke (2008) conducted in Turkey found that there are factors that support women in management; these include the presence of a family network to provide child care and the availability of inexpensive childcare, as well as the presence of generally supportive and family friendly, though paternalistic, organisational cultures. Respondent 8 added to this notion when she stated that:

"There is nothing like work life balance, you basically need to sacrifice one to get another because of the time conflicts"

There seems to be a difficult choice to be made between sacrificing family or work. Most respondents found it difficult to find the balance between career and family. As mentioned previously, 83 percent of respondents had children living with them under the age of 21. Most of the respondents felt that they had jobs that required more time than the normal working hours, and therefore found it difficult

to balance family life with work. Those women who indicated that they were challenged by having to meet both family and work commitments, referred to the consequences of one role suffering while they were fulfilling the other one.

Respondent 11 added the following sentiments:

"At times you really want both to work, (your family life and your career) and you put support structures in place, but this does not come cheap".

Some younger managers reported that being appointed to managerial positions at an early age caused a delay in starting families. They also reported that there was a reduction of social relationships such as friendships to cope with the role conflict. This supports the findings in the literature that women need to make a painful choice between a successful career and family.

However, most participants who indicated that compromising work was an option for them stated that they were not willing to compromise on their family time.

Respondent 10 expressed the following on the issue of children:

"There was a good job opportunity that I had to forgo as it would disturb my daughter's studies"

Respondent 10 further reported that there was an opportunity that she could not take as it required relocation which would disturb the children's schooling. Another respondent had to take a break in her career to raise children and this affected her progression on the corporate ladder.

It was evident that most respondents felt that their children were the main priority, and if there was a need for a compromise to be made, then work would take second place. This resulted in women taking time off from work to attend to family

responsibilities and wanting to be in positions that are less demanding. This supports the finding by Pillai et al. (2011), that women in management assign top priority to family, and this often seems to be a major impediment to career progression.

However, it must be noted that those women who had no children did not indicate any work *versus* family conflict. Moreover, the 33% of respondents above the age of 55 years reported that the conflict between work and family roles happened earlier in their careers.

The study revealed some other issues relating to the role of conflict between family life and work. However, a few respondents compromised family for their careers. One such issue was that respondents with no support system had resorted to sending children to boarding school. Others reported that it is expensive for women to balance family responsibility and work as they have to pay for support services. Other respondents with spouses and a support system still felt that there were domestic roles that they had to perform. Moreover, being a female executive puts pressure on their marriages.

According to Respondent 8:

"I sacrificed family for career. As a single parent I needed to take my son to boarding school to be able to further my studies and take a challenging job. Balancing career with family responsibilities is one of the main barriers."

With 12 out of the 20 respondents living with children under the age of 21, family responsibilities were found to affect the advancement of their careers. Even though the research found a few instances where black women managers sacrificed their family for their career, most respondents (15 out of 20) sacrificed their careers for their family responsibilities. Whilst this is a common challenge for

all women with families, this sacrifice affects black women's career growth opportunities. This was articulated by Respondent 6 as follows:

"Balancing work travel and family responsibilities is very difficult to balance and hence the tendency not to take those kinds of opportunities."

The research supports the finding of Pillai et al. (2011) who did a study of the glass ceiling effect on the progression of women into management positions and found that such an effect exists. Pillai's study found that company policies and practices are major barriers arresting the career progression of women. These are policies such as management of maternity leave, providing suitable incentives for women, suitable working hours for women, and suitable times for networking and strategic workshops. The difficulty of the administration of equal opportunity policies is reflected in organisations and is one of the reasons for the glass ceiling.

In conclusion, the work /life conflict for women will always exist, and women find that they have to sacrifice one for the other. Those women who have reached this senior level of management felt that they have had to sacrifice some family responsibilities to be in the positions they currently hold. Finding a balance between work and personal responsibilities continues to be a challenge for professional women. For women to fulfil their aspirations, they need to establish support structures in both areas.

4.4.9 Political game

Office politics was mentioned to be a barrier to career advancement for black female managers by 14 out of 20 respondents. According to Wentling (1992) there is evidence to suggest that most black people lack the skills to manage job and office-related politics. This failure to pay adequate attention to organisational politics results in most black employees failing to advance in their careers.
According to Respondent 17:

"The politics in the office happens and some colleagues always get selected ahead of you and are paid better. I have to fight and sometimes it becomes unprofessional but there is no other way. Black female managers have to develop coping strategies in order to survive in the workplace."

This assertion was supported by Respondent 14 by stating that:
"I had to be aggressive to deal with the office politics because everyone is trying to position themselves. Sometimes meetings are taken out of the office and you are isolated."

Respondent 15 also concurred with this by saying:

"Women have to fight and stand up for themselves to survive in the workplace. The politics is open and you know they don't want you in senior management."

There were various reasons cited for office politics to be such a barrier for career development for black women. According to Respondent 12:

"Office politics especially in the boardroom happen because certain characters are seeking recognition and power. When you are soft and accommodative sometimes colleagues take advantage of you."

The impact of office politics on the respondents seemed to be devastating as articulated by Respondent 9 who said:

"Office politics led to a lack of confidence in my performance. The work environment should be professional and limit office politics and other distractions."

According to the findings of this research office politics is a major barrier to career advancement for black female managers.

4.4.10 Other barriers to career advancement

The research found other barriers that had not been presented in the literature review. One of the barriers was related to work experience. Research found that although 33% of the respondents in the age bracket 33 – 40 years and had reached executive management positions through education, work experience was still very important. Their colleagues who had reached senior management through experience also emphasized that sufficient work experience was necessary to operate at management level.

4.5 Interventions to improve the status of female managers

This section evaluates whether the interventions employed by organisations in the media industry have been effective in assisting women to advance their careers.

If women advance through performance management, mentorship and training to higher positions in the organisation, they will be better placed to participate in advancing their careers. The analysis of results explored the extent to which these interventions are available for black women and whether they have assisted them to advance their careers.

4.5.1 Employment equity

Most respondents (16 out of 20) did not know whether their appointments were EE positions or whether the positions were advertised as such. For example, Respondent 8 was asked whether her position is an EE position and responded as follows:

"I don't know whether the position is AA position or not, and I actually feel that it doesn't matter whether the position is EE position or not. Filling of a position with the right person is more important than meeting EE statistics. Once the appointment is done, the appointment adds to the statistics not the other way round".

Literature indicates that EE has been widely supported in South Africa and has contributed to women economic empowerment (Mvimbi, 2009; Augusto, 2005). However, the implementation of EE has been faced with barriers including some organisations that remain steeped in policies and practices that discriminate employees on the basis of gender or race (Thomas, 2002). In some cases white employees have argued that EE is exclusionary while black males interpreted it as favouritism (Erasmus, 2008). Thus the appointment of women to senior positions through EE has often put enormous pressure on them to perform beyond normal expectations (Busby, 2006). However, if EE initiatives are to be successful there is need for sustained effort to manage the negative perceptions around transformation programmes (Oosthuizen & Naidoo, 2010).

4.5.2 Skills Development

It was evident from the respondents' demographics that all participants had a degree equivalent or higher. This proves that training and knowledge are critical in any process for advancing career ambitions. Historical evidence indicates that women were generally disadvantaged in terms of education and job opportunities. As a result they lacked the necessary skills required in the workplace (Morrison, 1992).

However, some senior managers (6 out of 20) stated that they were placed on an executive training programme when they were appointed, to improve their business knowledge. The respondents accepted that their development was primarily their own responsibility. They had talent but lacked experience and felt that succession planning was essential as well as mentoring for them to grow and succeed in advancing their careers. Career planning and training were found to have been critical in growing black women into these senior positions. The respondents in this study had already reached management level without formal career planning and training and found mentorship to be more beneficial in improving their careers.

4.5.3 Mentorship

Bradley (2005) suggests that mentoring provides guidance on the level of work required for promotion and tenure. Respondents interviewed in the study indicated that mentoring was needed to assist black women to be effective in their positions. Most (15 out of 20) respondents felt that it was important to have social connections and access to informal networks to assist with providing career and social support. Respondents also emphasised that it was important to find a mentor to whom one related to in terms of race and gender as that mentor would have had similar experiences and would have "walked the same mile" as the person being mentored.

Respondent 11 gave the following response on mentorship:

"I would not have made it without a mentor, I have two mentors, one who leads me professionally and a life mentor; it's important to have someone to share your experiences with, as a women, because they are different from those of your male colleagues".

Respondents older than 55 years felt that they had gained experience by having diverse mentors. Indeed, there was no individual mentor to whom they could relate in all aspects; the mentors helped the respondents to see things from different perspectives. One respondent highlighted that her mentor was a White male and at times would initiate meetings for her as he felt that service partners would not take her seriously as a Black young female in the technology sector.

It seemed that gender also played a role in mentorship. Five of the participants revealed that they drew social support from their mentors who were female.

Respondent 11 stated that:

“I have been very fortunate to have a mentor and a line manager who was a Black female earlier in my career; she understood the barriers of being a Black female executive in this environment as she had walked the mile before me. I attribute part of my success to having her as my mentor”.

These findings support the literature which states that an encouraging mentor can give the necessary guidance to assure the person being mentored that she is progressing in the right direction. The literature suggested that mentorship and training can assist women in advancing their careers and growing into management positions. The research thus further supports available literature that indicates that mentorship has a huge influence in helping women to succeed in strategic positions. Mentorship programmes were found not to be the responsibility of the organisation but that of the individual needing mentorship. Those respondents who were involved in mentorship programmes expressed the view that mentoring was effective in facilitating their career advancement.

With the number of professional black women growing, black women managers need to understand the importance of mentoring the future generation. After all, future black women managers are looking to industry experts to provide guidance and impart knowledge.

The interventions to improve the status of black female managers are summarised in Table 9 below.

Table 9: Summary perceptions of respondents on organisation interventions

Intervention	Summary of respondents' views
Employment equity	• EE initiatives are widely applauded for having increased the numbers of women accessing employment. • EE initiatives are also is contributing significantly to women economic empowerment. • Although women are benefiting from EE initiatives through appointments to senior positions they are inadvertently being put on the spotlight and under pressure to perform. • Some respondents are of the opinion that it should not matter that they were appointed through EE, the focus should be much more on performance.
Skills development	• Lack of relevant skills and qualifications for employment is a remnant of the South Africa's historical past. • Women are increasingly gaining access to training opportunities to advance their careers. • Respondents perceive up-skilling as an individual responsibility for one to advance their career. • Some organisations provide skills training for employees although in black female managers are often side-lined.
Mentorship	• There is a lack of female mentors and role models in the workplace and as such black females struggle to find mentors to assist them in understanding and navigating the workplace. • Mentorship is critical for both career management as well as dealing with office politics and various

Intervention	Summary of respondents' views
	stereotypes playing out in organisations. • Mentoring is an effective tool for integrating women in the organisational culture and enhancing women's identity in the workplace. • Women with mentors are also likely to be exposed to relevant networks in the media industry.

The barriers to career advancement identified by the respondents and workplace interventions for improving the status of female managers have been discussed above. Table 10 below presents a summary of the responses of all respondents in terms of the barriers identified. It is interesting to note firstly that all barriers were mentioned by multiple respondents. The main barriers to career advancement to black women in the media industry revolve around balancing career and family life, political games, racial issues, scepticism around qualifications and gender stereotypes.

4.6 Summary

Black female managers still face a variety of barriers inhibiting their chances of advancing the careers in the media industry as shown in Table 8 above.

Table 10: Cross reference of responses versus barriers to career advancement

	Barrier	Response Rate	R 1	R 2	R 3	R 4	R 5	R 6	R 7	R 8	R 9	R 10	R 11	R 12	R 13	R 14	R 15	R 16	R 17	R 18	R 19	R 20
1	Balancing career and family	15				√	√	√		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√		√	√
2	Political game	14						√	√		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
3	Racial issues	13			√		√	√		√		√		√	√	√	√	√	√		√	√
4	Skills/qualifications questioned	13	√				√	√		√		√	√	√	√		√	√	√	√	√	
5	Gender stereotypes	12		√	√		√	√			√			√		√	√	√	√	√		√
6	Remuneration differences	11				√		√			√		√		√	√	√	√	√	√		√
7	Glass ceiling	10	√	√		√				√	√			√			√	√	√			√
8	Lack of confidence	8							√		√	√	√		√	√			√		√	
9	Unsupportive work environment	9				√	√	√	√					√			√	√		√		√
10	Limiting organisational structures	7		√										√		√	√	√	√		√	

Based on Table 10 above, Figure 1 below shows the distribution of the barriers according to frequency of being mentioned by the respondents.

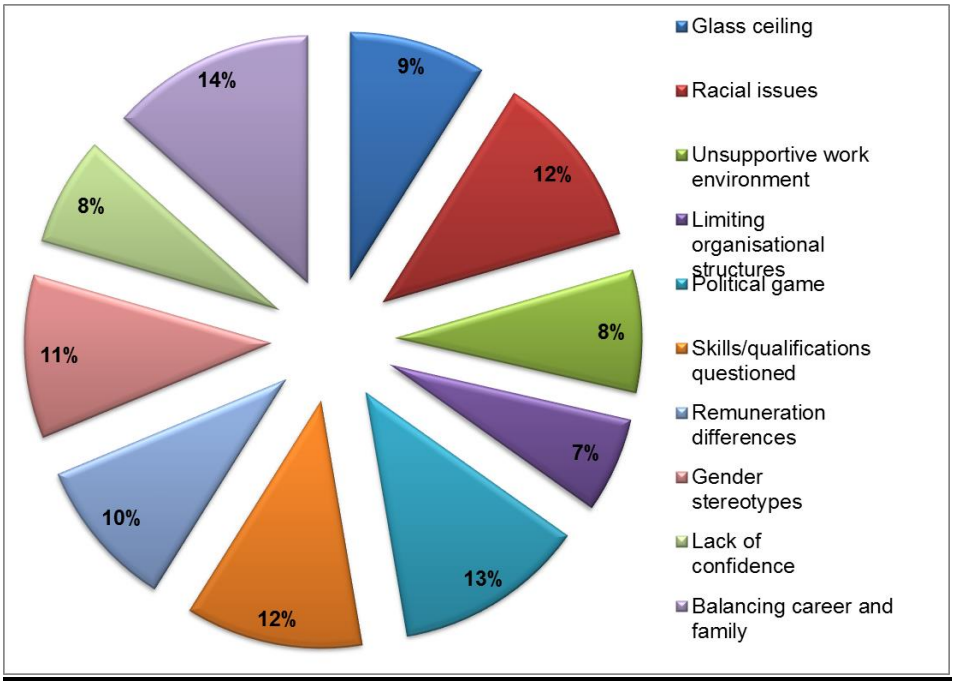


Figure 3: Summary of barriers

Based on the results presented above the following key conclusions are stated:

- The top five and major barriers to the career advancement of black women in the media industry are:
    - balancing career and family responsibilities;
    - office politics;
    - skills and qualifications questioned;
    - racial discrimination;
    - gender stereotypes.

These findings coincide with the suggestions by the reference group of experts and also various literature cited in Chapter 2.

- Most respondents felt that office politics tended to isolate women and force them to miss opportunities for advancement.

- All respondents felt that they have the opportunities to use their skills and experience to advance their careers in the face of scepticism expressed by male colleagues.
- Respondents indicated that they were able to handle race issues with their colleagues and that this was a challenge that was manageable and was getting better.
- Gender discrimination was found to be more prevalent with black male colleagues.
- Support interventions such as career planning and training are critical for growing Black women into management positions. Mentorship was found to be a support intervention necessary for Black women already appointed to these positions. Mentorship also assisted Black women in their career development by guiding and supporting them in their jobs.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this research is to identify the perceived barriers to black women's career advancement in the media industry in South Africa. Chapter 4 presented the findings from both literature and the research study conducted within the media industry in South Africa. Following barriers were noted to impede the advancement of women:

- Balancing career growth and family responsibility
- Political game
- Racial issues
- Skills/qualifications questioned
- Gender stereotypes
- Remuneration differences
- Glass ceiling
- Lack of confidence in performance
- Unsupportive work environment and limiting organisational and work structures

Chapter 5 provides the main conclusions and recommendations to address the noted shortcomings, and highlights possible areas for further investigation to enhance the career advancement of black female managers in the media industry.

The significance of this study is that it provided answers to the questions that seek to establish if the media industry is transforming by supporting black female professionals to progress with the careers. The research explored the barriers that that black females encounter in their career development process. This study confirmed that even after almost 20 years of democracy in South Africa, supported by a liberal constitution, there are still barriers associated with race and gender that black female professionals encounter in the workplace. It is evident (as demonstrated by table 1) that transformation polices have unlocked the

potential for black female professionals to progress in the workplace but organisations need to remove barriers that are preventing black female managers from moving forward in their careers.

5.2 Main findings in the Research

The research study found that the top five and major barriers to the career advancement of black women in the media industry are: balancing career and family responsibilities; office politics; skills and qualifications questioned; racial discrimination; and gender stereotypes. However, female black managers indicated that they had ample opportunities to advance their careers within their organisations. The majority of these women were in senior management and a few were in executive management positions. Most of the appointments to these positions were through AA. All the managers had at least a graduate qualification indicating that even when they were appointed through AA initiatives, they still possessed suitable qualifications.

The challenge of balancing family responsibilities and career progression were evident in the media industry. This is particularly so if career opportunities require travel. This was rightly articulated by Respondent 10 when she said:

"Balancing work travel and family responsibilities is very difficult to balance and hence the tendency not to take those kind of opportunities."

Similarly Respondent 8 had to put her son in boarding school in an effort to balance her career, studies and family responsibilities.

"I sacrificed family for career, as a single parent I needed to take my son to boarding school to be able to further my studies and take a challenging job."

The research found that even though the career advancement of women has improved, there still remain stereotypes to the effect that black female managers'

skills and qualifications were questioned. Moreover, male managers consider their performance to be superior to that of their black female counterparts.

Female black managers in the media industry continue to struggle with barriers related to racial and gender discrimination. Although they have to cope with these barriers, the cumulative effect of these barriers on black women impacts negatively on their career advancement ambitions.

5.3 Attainment of research objectives

The research was able to establish the perceptions of black female managers concerning the barriers that impede the advancement of their careers. The research was also able to point out those barriers that obstruct their advancement within the organisations and from the attitudes of colleagues as well as the social perspective. It also pointed out barriers that black female managers face as professional women, mothers and wives. However, the research also discussed possible solutions to support the progression of women to senior levels as highlighted by interview candidates.

5.4 Limitations of the study

The small sample size of women from a specific geographic location compromises the generalizability of the results. Thus the results obtained cannot be generalised to represent all black women in the media industry. The sample was from Gauteng so it could be generalised to South Africa as a whole, as the context for black women across the country is the same as in Gauteng. However, it cannot be generalised outside South Africa and to other industries. Nevertheless, the findings of the study might be valuable and applicable to other industries.

The limitation on the sample size of the respondents was insufficient given the growing and changing population size. The vast responses with responses not converging to one view on all questions also suggest the saturation of data was not reached and that more possible responses regarding the subject matter might

have been elicited with extended research. The respondents cited a wide range of experiences in their journey to develop their careers and there was not much repetition evident in responses. This could have been resolved by increasing the number of respondents but this was not possible, because of time constraints.

Face-to-face interviews also posed some challenges. This type of interview might have led participants to give socially desirable responses in their interaction with the researcher. The position of the interviewer may have also influenced the responses of the participants. The respondents knew that the researcher was in the same industry as the respondents, and therefore they could have withheld information. On the other hand, similarities could have led to the participants being more comfortable with the researcher and therefore being more open.

The researcher's involvement in the interpretation of results, as well as in the overall project makes the research process and findings subjective. Content analysis is prone to subjectivity and bias of the researcher. However, many direct quotes were used to minimise any subjectivity by illustrating consistent support for interpretation.

5.5 Recommendations to organisations

While the research centred on individual respondents, those respondents suggested two recommendations to organisations to improve the career progression opportunities of black women in the media industry:

a) **Recommendation 1:** The workplace environment should be improved to accommodate the unique situation of female employees to allow them to balance both work and family life. This could be in the form of having day-care centres or crèches within or around work sites in line with South African legislation.

b) **Recommendation 2:** Organisations need to support the development of black female managers by giving them experience to build self-confidence, to enable them to transition to more senior and executive positions. This should also be supported with executive mentorship and training when there are new executive appointments. This will inevitably enable male colleagues to acknowledge the skills and experience of their female counterparts.

c) **Recommendation 3:** The workplace environment should be improved to remove the silo effect of female managers. The increased interaction with male colleagues should in the long run lead to sharing of experiences to enable female professionals to be viewed without prejudice or stereotypes. This will inevitably limit the damaging office politics that inhibit career progression of black female managers.

5.6 Recommendations to black female managers

Responsibility for the career development and advancement of women cannot be abdicated to the women's organisations. Black female managers have a responsibility to empower themselves. These are some of the recommendations of the black female managers surveyed:

a) **Recommendation 1:** Black female managers need to take responsibility for their advancement in the workplace by identifying mentors to guide them on their chosen career path. Professional mentors are an asset in management as the mentee is assisted to navigate the workplace on issues such as office politics, gender and racial discrimination in a positive and strategic manner that supports career advancement. Human resources management personnel need to facilitate these mentorship programmes.

b) **Recommendation 2:** Black female managers also need to be aware of policies and procedures available in the workplace to address issues of

discrimination on the basis of gender and race, including other similar malpractices. This awareness is likely to enable black women to take recourse to these provisions thereby putting pressure on organisations to provide transformational and support services for the advancement of women.

c) **Recommendation 3:** Black female managers need to assert themselves and move away from the stereotype that management is a white male terrain. To achieve this goal black women must continue to upskill themselves in order to build on their qualifications and increase their skills. Their credentials are an asset that can reduce the areas of discrimination that women might be exposed to.

5.7 Further research

The research study indicated clearly that female managers were taking strides to develop their careers and that there was an improvement in the extent of their involvement in the workplace.

Further research could look into the following suggested areas:

- Black women's perceptions of the quality of career enhancing programmes in the workplace in the South African media industry;
- The characteristics of networks and mentorship initiatives and their contribution towards career progression and effectiveness of female black managers in the workplace;
- Barriers encountered by females managers who have had a fast career progression to management levels;
- Barriers encountered by black female managers who started employment after implementation of EE;
- Understanding work and office politics for better career management;
- Confronting the work-life balance as a strategy to support career development for women;

- Strategies for addressing the underlying factors driving recurrent racial discrimination in the workplace in South Africa.

5.8 Conclusion

The study examined black women's perceptions of the barriers to career development in the South African media industry. Research found that black women have the opportunities to use their skills and experience to advance their careers. Based on the results of the study, organisations need to create suitable conditions in the workplace to support the career advancement of women.

Organisations need to fast track the development of black female managers by providing them experience to build self-confidence before they are appointed into executive positions by AA. Organisations should also offer support interventions such as career planning, training and mentorship for developing black women, so that they are more effective in management positions.

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APPENDIX A: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Section 1: Demographic details

1. Please indicate your age range :

Age	
<34	
35-40	
41-45	
46-54	
>55	

2. Please indicate your parental status

Parental status	
Living with children under 21	

3. What is your highest education attained?

Education(highest level attained)	
Senior High school certificate	
Bachelor's Degree	
Post Graduate Degree	
Professional (CA, CFA, IMM)	
Other (PhD)	

4. Management level

Junior Management	
Middle management	
Senior Management	
Executive level	

5. Please indicate your period in management

No of years in Seniors management	
<1 year	
1 to 3 years	
3 to 5 years	
more than 5 years	

Section 2:

Any barriers experienced

6. Kindly share barriers you have experienced in your career. These could have been discrimination in the workplace due to any of the factors below :
    i. Beliefs and attitudes held by members in the organisation
    ii. Job pressures
    iii. Any Unexplained preferences in appointment
    iv. Racial inequality
    v. Solation , sex stereotypes and performance pressures

    b. Please describe in your view, why you felt the factors above were discriminatory or an inequality.
    c. How did this affect your career path
7. As a black woman, have you developed a strategy to deal with challenges presented by career related barriers?

Racial discrimination

8. Have you ever experienced any racial discrimination?
    a. Please describe why in your view you felt this was discriminatory or an inequality.
    b. How did it affect your career path
9. In the early stages of your career, have you ever felt isolated from an operational perspective from gender or race stereotyping?

Gender stereotyping

10. Have the attitudes of colleagues towards you as a woman affected you in your career path.
11. Do you find that white women are treated differently by white male colleagues?
12. Are structures within in your organisation supportive to women i.e.
    a. Networking opportunities,
    b. Regular travelling responsibilities
    c. Information deliberately withheld from you as a woman

Office politics

13. Have you been exposed to office related politics
    a. What your approach in dealing with politics is
    b. Did it affect your career path at the time
    c. Are you comfortable with dealing with office politics

Support structures

14. Are there any interventions in your organisations to assist you with career planning
    a. In your career have you been part of organisational career advancement interventions?
15. Do you have, or have been part of an effective performance management scheme?
    a. Were promotions based on performance management
    b. Were increases based on performance management
    c. Were Training needs identified by this scheme
16. Does the organisation have a promotion policy in place
    a. Does this organisational structure support the progression of women?
17. Are you aware of policy development in the organisation
    a. As a manager have you ever been consulted before policies are formulated.
    b. Do you know the gender constituency of the policy development team?

Education

18. Has your educational background played role in your career development, maybe earlier in your career path?
    a. Have you ever acted in a senior position to advance your career
    b. Have you advanced your studies while working and what was your experience?

Mentorship

19. Have you ever been mentored in your career
    a. Do you think that there is value in having a mentor
    b. What is your opinion with regards to available female mentors in your career path?
    c. Do you think that the gender of your mentor matters in your development and why
    d. In your opinion , are men willing to mentor black females

Salary as a motivation

20. Is pay a motivation for you?
    a. And have you made a career move for reward rather than career advancement.

21. Does your organisation reward based on job delivery and results rather than gender?
    a. Do you find that the roles in your organisation are segregated by gender, with predominately female roles being lower paid roles than male?
    b. Further to the above, are senior management positions seen as a male preserve as they are associated to being tough.
    c. Do you think that your position is rewarded the same as your male counterpart?
    d. Could the factor of pay not being rewarded accordingly demotivate you from progressing to higher levels, by the fact that you will not be rewarded accordingly?

Own reservations

22. In the workplace, women are perceived as lacking confidence in their own performances
    a. What is your view on this

b. What do you think causes this issue in the workplace
c. In your opinion does this perception obstruct the advancement of women in the workplace?

23. Have you ever decided not to apply for a senior role because you felt you were not ready?
    a. Have you then taken a less senior role in preparation for the senior role
24. Has your confidence ever been dented by the organisation you work for by either:
    a. Negative feedback; or
    b. Lack of support.

Functions of women

25. When family/work conflict occurs, do you find that work takes priority over family?
    a. Has a choice between the two ever compromised your career choices and advancement?
26. Do you think it is important to work in organisations with flexible working hours to your family life stage?

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW REQUEST

Graduate School of Business
University of Witwatersrand
2 St David's Place
Parktown
2193

Dear Madam

Re: Black Women's perceptions of Barriers to career advancement in the South African media industry.

This serves to confirm that the above-mentioned research forms part of a dissertation in partial fulfilment toward completion of Master of Business Administration (MBA) at the Wits Business School.

The objective of this research is to present the perceptions of black women with regards to barriers to career advancement in the South African media industry. A literature review was done to evaluate the effectiveness of Employment Equity programmes and this interview will be used to draw out the barriers encountered by female managers in advancing their careers, using in-depth interviews conducted one on one. Even though the interviews will be recorded, please be assured of complete confidentiality. Each interview will take approximately 30 minutes to conduct.

It must be noted that your participation in the interview should not be limited by the scope outlined by me, the interviewer. Any additional comments and contributions from yourself /organisation/stakeholders related to this topic would be greatly appreciated.

Yours Sincerely,
Khosi Dlamini (MBA Student)