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**Gordon Institute
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**Organisational culture factors influencing
gender diversity levels in companies**

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A research project submitted to the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration.

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Abstract

Despite modest increases in the appointment of women in top management levels over the past 10 years, the proportion still remains low at 20% in 2012 (Department of Labour Republic of South Africa, 2013). Even with substantial evidence showing a positive correlation between gender diversity and business performance, women are still underrepresented at senior management, executive management and board levels. The purpose of this research was to identify the key organisational culture factors which are influencing gender diversity levels in companies, particularly in senior and top management levels.

Through quantitative descriptive research methodology, the research aimed to identify which of these factors are promoting and inhibiting increased gender diversity levels in companies. The data were collected from women and men working in South African organisations by means of a questionnaire. The questionnaire was completed by 69 respondents.

This research study determined that organisational culture factors promoting increased gender diversity in organisations with higher gender diversity levels are different to factors inhibiting increased gender diversity in organisations with low gender diversity levels. The research brought insight into which organisational culture factors can be used as enablers to create an organisational culture which is conducive for increasing gender diversity.

Keywords

Organisational culture factors, Women leaders, Gender diversity, Senior management

Declaration

I declare that this research project is my own work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration at the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University. I further declare that I have obtained the necessary authorisation and consent to carry out this research.

Anthea Kahn

10 November 2014

Date

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1. Introduction to Research Problem

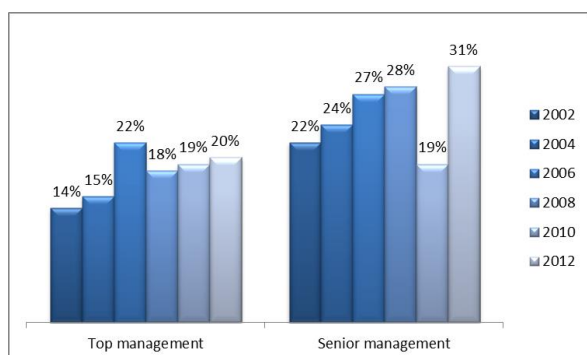
The purpose of this research is to identify the key organisational culture factors which are influencing gender diversity levels in companies, particularly at senior and top management levels. Through quantitative descriptive research methodology, the research will aim to identify which of these factors are promoting and inhibiting increased gender diversity levels in companies.

In response to the slow trends toward greater levels of gender diversity in organisations, during 2014, the South African government proposed the new Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Bill which aims to enforce gender transformation compliance in the private and public sectors (Republic of South Africa, 2013). Under the new legislation, organisations will be required to fill a minimum of 50% of all top and senior management positions with women (Republic of South Africa, 2013).

The Employment Equity Act was instituted in 1998 for the South African private and public sector to address inequality. The proportion of women in top management levels has grown from 14% in 2002 to 20% in 2012 and the proportion of women in senior management levels has grown from 22% in 2002 and to 31% in 2012 (Department of Labour Republic of South Africa, 2013).

Although there appears to be progress, the 10-year timeframe must be considered. The growth trend has been slow and slightly erratic at times, particularly from 2008 when the proportion of women in top management levels dropped 3.4% from 2006 and has only grown to 20% in 2012, as indicated in figure one (Department of Labour Republic of South Africa, 2013). No explanation is provided in the published report for the large decrease from 2008 to 2010 and subsequent increase to 2012 for senior management statistics.

Figure 1: Proportion of females in South Africa (2002–2012)



These numbers reflect a very small average annual increase over 10 years, at 6% and 9% respectively, for top and senior management levels. Additionally, 20% and 31% is still noticeably lower than the composition of the Economically Active Population (EAP), of which females comprise 45% (Statistics South Africa, 2012).

The EAP includes people from 15 to 64 years of age who are either employed or unemployed and who are seeking employment, and is meant to provide guidance to employers in order to assist them in determining the resource allocation and subsequent interventions that are needed to achieve an equitable and representative workforce (Department of Labour Republic of South Africa, 2013, p7).

When considering board level positions, these numbers appear even lower. The Businesswomen's Association of South Africa Census (2012) provides statistics for directors, CEOs and chairpersons:

- 17.1% of directors
- 9.1% of CEOs
- 5.5% of chairpersons.

Globally, these proportions are similar. In its 2013 census report on Fortune 500 companies, Catalyst (2013a) revealed that women held 16.9% of board seats in 2013 compared to 16.6% in 2012.

With its stalled growth of proportions in top management levels, South African organisations still have a long way to go to achieve the standard set out in the Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Bill. Extrapolating the proportion of females in Top management positions from figure one using recent average growth rate of 4.3%, reveals that the 50% target will only be achieved in 2056.

McKinsey (2013a) released a report on country level detail (table 1), which indicates some countries stagnating and even declining in female representation on corporate boards and executive committees. From the South African CEO and chairperson perspective, this ranks closely to China and Brazil in the lower half of the table. European countries, particularly Nordic countries, are faring much better when it comes to female representation on corporate boards and executive committees.

Table 1: Proportion of women on corporate boards and executive committees (2011, 2013)

| | Corporate boards | | Executive committees | |
|-----------------------|------------------|------|----------------------|------|
| | 2013 | 2011 | 2013 | 2011 |
| Norway | 34 | 35 | 14 | 15 |
| Sweden | 27 | 25 | 21 | 21 |
| France | 27 | 20 | 9 | 8 |
| Denmark* | 20 | 20 | 9 | 9 |
| Germany | 19 | 16 | 7 | 3 |
| Belgium | 18 | 11 | 14 | 11 |
| United Kingdom | 17 | 16 | 15 | 11 |
| United States | 16 | 15 | 14 | 14 |
| Italy | 15 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| China* | 8 | 8 | 9 | 9 |
| Brazil | 6 | 5 | 8 | 7 |
| India* | 5 | 5 | 3 | 3 |
| Japan* | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 |

* 2013 numbers for Denmark, India and Japan reflect the same as 2011, and for China 2012

Country-specific cultural and socioeconomic factors are powerful influencers of women's role in the workforce and could be a reason for the varying results per country (McKinsey, 2012a). In McKinsey's *Women Matter* report for Asia and Latin America, women in Asia are expected to take sole responsibility for family and household duties, while gender bias in Latin American culture makes it easier for men to advance in their careers (McKinsey, 2013b; McKinsey, 2012b).

In addition to the cultural factors, a positive correlation was identified between government support and women's position in the workplace (position refers to board representation of women, women's share of men's working hours, and employment rate of women). The correlation was conducted for European countries with Norway, Denmark and Sweden showing the highest level of government support and women's workplace position in the workplace (McKinsey, 2012a). In contrast, for Asia and Latin America, these two regions rate "lack of pro-family public policies/support services" as one of the top three barriers to advancement for women while in Europe, this is not considered a major barrier (McKinsey 2013b, McKinsey 2012b).

Despite the fact that women make up most of the educational talent, with 60% of global graduates being female, the trends of women in top management do not indicate a similar progression to that of the increase in educational talent (20-first, 2014). The results are underwhelming with most companies and managers becoming frustrated at the lack of progress. There is a lot of "gender fatigue" in companies that feel they have tried everything – and failed – to crack the issue, but most have not even really started yet (20-first, 2014). In

many countries, women's advancement has become sluggish and overall progress has slowed or stalled (Catalyst, 2013a).

The argument for greater female representation at various management levels in organisations has been debated for the last 30 years. Prior to 1990, research focused predominantly on discrimination and bias while more recent gender diversity literature suggests that most of the research includes perspectives that hold negative estimates such as stereotyping and social roles (Shore, Chung-Herrera, Dean, Ehrhart, Jung, Randel, & Singh, 2009). Studies that are more recent have shown a positive correlation between the percentage of women in senior leadership in a company and the impact on business performance.

Research has linked the business case for increased female representation on boards to that of the company's financial performance. The Catalyst (2007) report on the corporate performance and women's representation on boards revealed that there is an alignment between women board directors and strong performance at Fortune 500 companies. If Return on Equity is considered, companies with more women board directors outperform those with the least by 53%, while stronger-than-average results prevail at companies where at least three women serve on boards (Catalyst, 2007).

Recent studies have extended the business case beyond financial performance. Campbell and Minguez-Vera (2008) also investigated the link between the board's gender diversity and financial performance of the organisation which revealed that the board's diversity has a positive impact on the value of the organisation. However, Campbell and Minguez-Vera (2008) went further to provide evidence from other research which reasons that greater gender diversity stems beyond just the firm's financial value. There are four additional benefits given which encompass attributes related to competitively serving customers:

- By matching the diversity of directors to the diversity of potential customers and employees, a better understanding of the marketplace is achieved.
- Creativity and innovation is increased.
- Problem solving can be enhanced.
- The competitive advantage can be improved by improving the image of the firm.

Further benefits related to workforce attributes have also been established. Zhang and Hou (2012) tested the relationship between gender diversity and workgroup performance and found that gender diversity can enhance group performance by reducing conflict. Dezső and

Ross (2012) argued that informational and social diversity benefits are experienced with women in top management, which motivates women in the middle management levels. A study in an emerging economy with low representation of females on corporate boards showed that the effects of gender diversity as a symbol might even be adequate to bring a change of perspective at the board level, which could lead to enhanced performance (Mahadeo, Soobaroyen, & Hanuman, 2012).

Similarly, analysis by Catalyst (2013b) showed that a 10% increase in female board membership is associated with a 21% increase in female executive presence in companies, creating robust talent pipelines. The findings regarding the business case for increased female representation in companies extend beyond financial performance, and should be a driver for companies to make this a strategic intent. To achieve these benefits, companies have included the achievement of gender diversity in its strategic intent and established various organisational development programmes which target women development, succession planning and talent management.

However, few companies are able to realise these benefits. According to a detailed benchmark of European companies conducted in 2012, only 16% of 230 companies surveyed have achieved reasonable results from implementing measures to improve gender diversity (McKinsey, 2013a). Clarke (2011) contends that to implement development programmes targeted for women is just one strategy for redressing the gender imbalance of senior management and on corporate boards.

In its 2013 McKinsey *Women Matter* report, it stresses that transformation must be supported by a more inclusive culture of diversity at many leadership levels (McKinsey, 2013a). Previous research indicated that companies need to create an "*ecosystem of change measures*, such as CEO commitment, individual development programs for women, key performance indicators and human resource processes" (McKinsey, 2013a, p5). Furthermore, corporate culture is twice as important as mind-sets of women in their belief to succeed, and companies need to address the underlying shared assumptions and cultural gaps to reach greater gender diversity (McKinsey, 2013a).

Instilling an inclusive culture for increased gender diversity levels is also substantiated in academic literature. A study by Dwyer, Richard and Chadwick (2003) found that firms that are aiming to diversify their manager levels should have the appropriate culture in place to realise the benefits of gender diversity fully. Hofmeyr and Mzobe (2012) affirm that only when there is a fundamental culture change, will women advance in significant numbers;

however, companies themselves first have to believe that increasing diversity at management levels is both morally and competitively necessary

Even with substantial evidence showing a positive correlation between gender diversity and business performance, women are still underrepresented at senior management, executive management and board level. One way that South African organisations can redress gender imbalance and respond appropriately to attain the requirements stipulated in the new Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Bill is to investigate organisational culture as an enabler to achieve gender diversity effectively.

This research study will identify the organisational culture factors that are influencing gender diversity levels in companies, and understand which of these factors are promoting and inhibiting increased gender diversity levels in companies. The following section covers the literature review that provides an overview of organisational culture, gender diversity and organisational culture factors influencing gender diversity in companies.

2. Literature Review

The literature review will first define gender diversity and organisational culture. The next section identifies evidence in literature that stresses the importance of organisational culture in addressing gender diversity. Finally, factors of organisational culture found in literature which influence gender diversity are explored.

2.1 Gender diversity

Many meanings of diversity exist in literature with the definition often becoming unclear (Herring, 2009). It can refer to policies and practices that seek to include people who are considered different from traditional members, and aims to create an inclusive culture that values and uses the talents of all would-be members (Herring, 2009). Specifically, many terms are used interchangeably in implying the gender diversity and representation of women in companies, namely gender balance, gender parity, gender equity, and gender equality.

Herdman and Mcmillan-Capehart (2010) refer to diversity as the degree of intra-organisational representation of people with different group affiliations of cultural significance. A modest definition of gender diversity is when a company is represented by an equal proportion of men and women. According to the Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Bill, organisations will be required to fill a minimum of 50% of all top and senior management positions with women (Republic of South Africa, 2013). Therefore, in the context of this research, gender diversity will refer to when a company is represented by a more equal proportion of men and women, specifically in senior and top management positions.

Richard, Kirby, and Chadwick (2013) refer to diversity as "group heterogeneity" and emphasize that heterogeneity alone may not be advantageous if a firm is not able to take advantage of the unique insight, judgment, experience and know-how of women. There is much discussion on the "diversity advantage" where many benefits are derived from having a diverse workforce. However, it is critical that there is an organisational culture of inclusion which allows people with different backgrounds and ways of thinking to work together (Richard et al., 2013). Catalyst (2013a) says that leaders who wish to create inclusive cultures need to value the diversity of talents, experiences, and identities that employees bring.

The next section of the literature review will outline organisational culture and its definition in the workplace.

2.2 Organisational culture

Organisational culture has been defined as

the pattern of basic assumptions that a given group has invented, discovered, or developed in learning to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, and that have worked well enough to be considered valid, and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems (Schein, 1984, p.3).

In this seminal work, Schein (1984) identified various levels at which culture can be analysed:

- Assumptions (widely held, ingrained subconscious views)
- Values (preferences for alternative outcomes and means of achieving those outcomes)
- Artefacts (physical representation that includes rituals, slogans, traditions and myths).

Instead of listing the levels at which organisational culture can be analysed, Martins and Terblanche (2003) provide a more integrated view:

Organisational culture is comprised of the deeply seated values and beliefs shared by members of an organisation which forms the bases of communication and mutual understanding, and is preserved through the assumptions that is maintained through human interaction, and manifests in attitudes and behaviour.

This interpretation suggests that values and beliefs form the bases of organisational culture whereas the previous definition proposes that it is based on basic assumptions. Martins and Terblanche (2003, p.65) add that culture is communicated through various elements such as "symbolism, feelings, the meaning behind language, behaviours, physical settings and artefacts". Both interpretations suggest that culture is inherent in an organisation and is displayed through a number of features.

In more recent literature, organisational culture is referred to as a social phenomenon that impacts behaviour and norms. Acar and Acar (2014) refer to organisational culture as "social phenomena which aid in defining an organisation's character and norms" and state that culture is one of the main factors required for understanding organisations. Culture is a social characteristic that influences behaviour at organisational, group and individual levels (Hartnell, Ou & Kinicki, 2011).

All the interpretations of organisational culture provided in this section can be summated as the assumptions and values that define the character of an organisation, influence the behaviour of individuals, and are communicated through various features in the organisation. For the purposes of this research, it will be necessary to understand if organisational culture specifically influences gender diversity. The following section reviews the impact of organisational culture's role on gender diversity.

2.3 Organisational culture's role in gender diversity

The notion that organisational culture plays a role in organisational behaviour and processes has not been highly contested in literature. Schein (1984) stated that the actual understanding of organisational culture is integral to the process of management. Organisational culture plays a role not only in the behaviour of employees, but also in matters of promotion and decision-making (Acar & Acar, 2014).

Since organisational culture impacts management processes and decision-making, the impact can therefore be extended to aspects such as diversity and representation of women in senior management levels. This deduction is supported by Clarke (2011), who notes that the career progression of women to senior management levels is the result of a variety of factors such as organisational culture and organisational support.

Hofmeyr and Mzobe (2012) take a more defined stance by declaring that culture change is the *key* driver of progress and that the tactical issues of training programmes and flexible work arrangements are subsidiary to culture change. This statement echoes the distinction which Martins and Terblanche (2003) made between culture and rational tools: organisational culture influences behaviour by complementing managerial tools.

Literature suggests a link between organisational culture and gender diversity in its impact on management processes and decision-making. However, culture has been defined broadly and constitutes vast elements such as assumptions, beliefs and norms which inform how people interact and behave in an organisation. It would be more

effective for organisations to understand the subtlety and complexity of achieving gender diversity and to address the roots of the problem (Eagly & Carli, 2007).

Further exploration is needed to understand what the specific elements or factors are that influence gender diversity in organisations. It is necessary to systematically review these factors of culture that are obstructing organisations to achieve a more diverse gender workforce at senior management levels, before identifying how this needs to be changed.

2.4 Organisational culture factors influencing gender diversity

Culture is a very complex concept with an array of definitions and can cover almost anything in an organisation (Ivri & Ivri, 2011). Ibarra, Ely, and Kolb (2013) provide four categories of culture dimensions that inadvertently favour men: cultural beliefs about gender, workplace structures, practices, and patterns of interaction. This section provides a review of the factors of culture that are discussed in literature, as well as those factors particularly impacting gender diversity in organisations within the framework of these four dimensions.

2.4.1 Cultural beliefs about gender

Leadership stereotypes

Ibarra et al. (2013) suggest that "second-generation" forms of gender bias are the primary cause of women's persistent underrepresentation in leadership roles. This bias erects powerful but subtle and often invisible barriers for women that arise from dimensions of culture that inadvertently benefit men while putting women at a disadvantage (Ibarra et al., 2013). One of the key assumptions regarding women in senior leadership roles is that men make better leaders and women are still seen as ill-suited for leadership (Beeson & Valerio, 2012; Gallant, 2014; Hofmeyr & Mzobe, 2012; Sandler, 2014; Toh & Leonardelli, 2012). This assumption derives from the perception that a leader needs to have certain characteristics that are often exhibited by men.

These gender stereotypes tend to be deeply embedded in society and follow women and men into the workplace (Hofmeyr & Mzobe, 2012). Eagly and Carli (2007) noted that studies affirmed that women and men are linked with different traits, and relate men with more of the traits that connote leadership. These traits can be separated into two groups: communal and agentic. Women are associated with communal qualities such as being kind, affectionate and sympathetic, while men are associated

with agentic qualities such as being aggressive, dominant and ambitious (Eagly & Carli, 2007).

A study by Gallant (2014) revealed that participants individually and collectively referred to male leadership as being more authoritarian, having less emotion and being able to see the bigger picture. Sandler (2014) describes the perceived differences in women as being better listeners, having more empathy and higher orientation to collaborative working while their male counterparts are more ambitious and aggressive.

In another study, when a group of participants were asked to rank the characteristics of effective leaders, they indicated that male managers listed characteristics such as aggressiveness, confidence and objectivity, while female managers listed appreciation, recognising strengths, fairness, and accessibility as the most important characteristics (Barkacs & Standifird, 2008). Both studies aimed to show that society expects males to be more aggressive, while females are expected to be more cooperative. This could have negative consequences for women as leaders (Barkacs & Standifird, 2008).

The implication of the belief that men make better leaders than women is that followers might not have the conviction to support women leaders. Women leaders face higher standards than male leaders, always having to prove they can lead (Evans, 2011). This could discourage women from reaching senior management levels in their organisations. Toh and Leonardelli (2012) revealed some evidence that women leaders sometimes surrender the leadership role to men even when they demonstrate leadership behaviour that is superior, because women themselves believe that being masculine displays more leadership characteristics.

Double bind

Another dilemma related to this belief is that some women who do display "male" leadership characteristics are placed in a double bind. If they enact certain "male" leadership styles that secure advancement to senior management levels (Gallant, 2014) and display traditionally valued leadership behaviours such as assertiveness, they are seen as competent, but are not well liked (Evans, 2011).

Beeson and Valerio (2012) state that women who are seen as "too tough" are labelled "aggressive", while their female colleagues are viewed as "too soft", which

results in a damned-if-she-does and damned-if-she-doesn't double bind. This masculine leadership norm demonstrates that women leaders are perceived as "never just right" (Evans, 2011). In most cultures, women are expected to be nice, nurturing, and unselfish. This mismatch between conventionally feminine qualities and the qualities thought necessary for leadership puts female leaders in a double bind (Ibarra et al., 2013).

Prevailing leadership styles

Prevailing leadership styles in an organisation also play an influential role in determining opportunities for individuals to advance and question whether they might be able to advance (McKinsey, 2013a). The results of the *Women Matter* 2013 survey revealed that almost 40% of women believed that the prevailing leadership styles of their organisation are incompatible with women's leadership and communication styles. These results indicate that the assumed leadership traits are still a barrier for women to progress their career to senior management levels.

2.4.2 Workplace structures

Long working hours

As an organisational culture factor, organisational structures and systems contribute to the problem of women advancement by still favouring men more than women, as they ignore the woman's dual role (Hofmeyr & Mzobe, 2012). In some structures, success is still associated with long hours and a heavy commitment, making this expectation incompatible for women who are raising a family (Clarke, 2011). Despite having diversity initiatives in place, very few organisations provide relevant support to women during their childbearing years and organisations eventually lose many talented women during mid-career (Sandler, 2014).

Extensive travel

Ely, Ibarra, and Kolb (2011) provides an example where men are better supported by organisations to undertake careers that are more "demanding": expatriation arrangements for global positions often assume a "trailing spouse" who can easily move, whereas this arrangement is more unlikely to work for senior women. This again perpetuates the notion that men are a better fit for leadership roles partly because the paths to such roles were designed with men in mind. This results in boosting more men into senior leadership positions, which again reinforces the perception that men are a better fit (Ely et al., 2011).

Flexible work arrangements

McKinsey (2013a), also identified an "anytime, anywhere performance model" as a corporate culture factor which impacts gender diversity. The use of flexible time arrangements, specifically those offered to parents of young children, is seen as a barrier to advancement, as it is not perceived as compatible with a top-level career (McKinsey, 2013a). In a report by Grant Thornton (2014), the "motherhood tax" adds another dimension to the problem. The "motherhood tax" suggests that mothers lack "executive presence" because they have too many competing demands to be considered the ideal worker who is "always there" for the employer.

While sacrifices have to be made by both men and women in advancing their careers to the top, the sacrifices made by women appear to be greater due to the "motherhood tax". If organisations continue to offer incompatible practices for senior managers, this will continue to drive the perception that senior roles are not fit for women.

2.4.3 Practices

Leadership support

Across organisational theory, it is evident that leadership commitment is required to address change and resolve challenges within the organisation. In this context, the degree to which organisational leadership believes in the strategic importance of employees is necessary for the approval and implementation of diversity practices (Herdman & Mcmillan-Capehart, 2010). When diversity is supported by leadership, more value is obtained, as it is not simply an initiative driven by certain women or the human resource department (Virick & Greer, 2012).

Another signal on leadership commitment and support is the tendency for women's issues to be driven and supported by women leaders only. This was true in the case study of a union organisation where women's issues were marginalised from the agenda of union business and often only women officials would drive to have women's issues addressed through union bargaining (Cooper, 2012).

Building awareness of the gender diversity issue is most likely still a key factor in the development of support that needs to be addressed. Almost 30% of the men surveyed are unaware of the specific issues facing women in advancing their careers (McKinsey, 2013). More awareness might bring more support, which will signal to the

organisation and to women that there is opportunity to reach the top, regardless of gender.

Diversity levels

The diversity levels of management teams operate as a salient and visible signal of the organisation and leadership's support for diversity (Herdman & Mcmillan-Capeheart, 2010). Again, the implication is that the underrepresentation of women in leadership positions signals to would-be women leaders that being female is a disadvantage and discourages potential women leaders from requesting developmental advice and support from senior women leaders (Ely et al., 2011).

Sometimes, not only is visible support required, but also actual diversity levels will indicate true commitment.

Organisational hierarchies where more men hold leadership positions and where practices exist that equate leadership with behaviours believed to be common in men, powerfully communicate that women are not suited for leadership roles. It's essentially a self-fulfilling prophecy: low levels of gender diversity validate entrenched beliefs that support men's bids for leadership, which in turn, maintains the status quo (Ely et al., 2011, p. 475).

Recruitment

In achieving gender diversity, human resources practices can be seen as control systems and prominent features of the organisation that influence employee perceptions of the diversity climate (Herdman & Mcmillan-Capehart, 2010). There is evidence in literature that the diversity climate has an impact on the career progression of women. Diversity climate is defined as how fair the employee policies of an organisation are perceived, as well as how the integration of underrepresented individuals into the work environment is recognised (Virick & Greer, 2012). In the study, Virick and Greer (2012) found that women are more likely to succeed when the diversity climate is perceived as favourable.

These practices are argued to operate as symbolic signals to employees in the communication of organisational priorities and values (Herdman & Mcmillan-Capehart, 2010). Recruitment, placement, development, performance management, and retention strategies play a strong role in signalling the culture of gender diversity at various management levels.

With regard to recruiting, managers tend to choose people who are similar to the leaders they are replacing, making familiarity powerful in its influence over who is employed and promoted (Gallant, 2014). Sandler (2014) agrees that there is a tendency for people in leadership to recruit and promote people in their own image. This then perpetuates the culture of depicting leadership as certain characteristics that only men can truly display. The propensity to lean towards people who are similar to them on dimensions such as gender leads powerful men to sponsor and advocate for other men when leadership opportunities arise (Ely et al., 2011). The concept of familiarity also extends to sponsorship where leaders can actively drive advancement through opening doors, recommending women for promotions, and proposing existing positions at the top (McKinsey, 2013a).

Placement

In addition to recruiting and sponsoring certain types of leaders, the placement of women in certain positions further signals the limited opportunities women have to advance their careers. "Women have usually occupied support roles in human resources and other internal-facing roles, while men are considerably better represented in line management and customer-facing roles" (Beeson & Valerio, 2012). This stereotypical placement of women is a further signal that they are not suited for the kind of positions that are opportunities to learn how to become Chief Executive Officers (CEOs).

Sandler (2014) also noted that more women rise to senior roles in support or specialist functions rather than to general management positions. The chance of being promoted to more commercial roles on operating boards is reduced due to their limited line experience (Sandler, 2014). CEOs search for people with high-level profit-and-loss experience when seeking successors, however there are very few women holding these line officer positions (Weidenfeller, 2012).

Ibarra et al. (2013) refer to gendered career paths and gendered work where many entrenched organisational structures and work practices were designed to fit men's lives and situations at a time when women made up only a very small portion of the workforce. These work requirements may be outdated when it comes to the kinds of experience that best prepare a person to lead, however certain companies have not updated their recruitment models to align with outside changes.

Performance measurement

Whether defined performance metrics are established can sometimes indicate the level of fairness in promoting women to senior leadership. Beeson and Valerio (2012) observed that even when the development leaders are prioritised, there is less impact of their efforts because of the poor articulation of critical factors required to qualify someone for senior management positions.

Women are less likely to be overlooked for promotion when there are more explicit performance metrics (Virick & Greer, 2012). By clearly establishing the measures and conditions for progression to senior management, organisations remove the subjectivity and aid in creating a culture that could achieve greater representation of women leaders.

2.4.4 Patterns of interaction

Decision-making power

Cooper (2012) noted that women felt that they were involved in decisions to a certain point but were limited in their decision-making interactions at strategic levels. In some cases, women report feeling "left out of the loop" due to the limited opportunity available for them to exercise power and decision-making. A strong theme, which emerged from the study, was that women had a level of "invisibility" where they were "seen" but not "heard", or their contributions to business issues were not treated with as much importance as were those of men in similar roles (Cooper, 2012).

Limited decision-making power could also be attributed to the limited career opportunities women have and the typical internal-facing roles which are occupied by women. At the top as well as across the organisation, women lack access to powerful individuals due to their limited set of career opportunities (Beeson & Valerio, 2012). This inhibits their ability to demonstrate influence across the organisation.

Social interactions

Evidence in literature refers to social meetings "after-hours" from which women are marginalised. Cooper (2012) provides mixed evidence of references made to these occurrences, however it was stated that women were marginalised from these meetings primarily by virtue of non-work responsibilities. Another barrier for women in such settings is that networks are composed mostly of men and when men centre their networks on masculine activities, it is even more difficult to break into those networks (Eagly & Carli, 2007).

Not only do these settings provide another cultural signal that women are not meant for these positions, but also another implication for women is the disadvantage they have in building social capital at these settings. Eagly and Carli (2007) infer that social capital is probably even more necessary for women to advance their careers than task performance. Clarke (2011) slightly disagrees that social capital by itself will not overcome the issues faced by women in advancing their careers; however, it is an area that needs focus if women are to become equal players in the world of business networks.

2.5 Rationale for culture change

The final section of the literature review considers why culture change is necessary to improve the gender diversity levels of organisations. Even though companies are addressing barriers for the career advancement of women, the number of women in top and senior management levels remains low. From evidence uncovered in the literature review, organisational culture might be an enabler for improved gender diversity; however, this requires a step change from leadership.

Organisations will have to systematically break down the barriers, improve policies and practices, and stimulate transformation as culture change is a primary factor that will change the status quo (Hofmeyr & Mzobe, 2012). Therefore, it is not enough to only implement women's development programmes and incorporate this on a strategic agenda, it is also necessary to ensure that the culture and climate is changed to provide the platform for these initiatives to achieve the desired result sustainably.

For culture change to occur there needs to be leadership commitment to the process of acknowledging the underlying obstructions to achieving a more favourable culture. Beeson and Valerio (2012) state that without visible commitment from leadership, organisations will lose talented women managers who will rather pursue their careers at companies that create a level playing field for advancement. Organisations need to implement practices that remove gender bias in succession planning and career development, as well as ensure that stereotypes do not obstruct the goal of improving gender diversity (Beeson & Valerio, 2012).

Strategies to increase the number of women in senior management levels are fragmented, cosmetic and ineffective – the invisible organisational barriers must be addressed to promote gender diversity (Sandler, 2014). Companies search for quick fix solutions to their management and diversity challenges which take the form of

workshops or interventions, however significant progress will not be made until the culture in organisations changes to embrace women advancement (Hofmeyr & Mzobe, 2012).

The literature review has revealed a number of organisational culture factors which are potentially deterring the advancement of women into senior management levels and possibly impacting the ability for women to perform in management roles. South African organisations, in particular, need to be more aware of the factors influencing gender diversity at senior management levels if they intend to achieve the goal of the Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Bill.

2.6 Conclusion

Eagly and Carli (2007) argue that the "glass ceiling" cannot be regarded as a satisfactory explanation for the low representation of women in senior leadership anymore, and suggest that the concept of a "labyrinth" would be more appropriate in labelling the passage to leadership. Organisational research on the causes of low gender diversity levels in senior management levels has transgressed from focussing on intentional efforts to exclude women, to considering "second-generation" forms of gender bias (Ely et al., 2011). These are the "powerful, invisible barriers to women's advancement to senior management levels which arise from cultural beliefs about gender, as well as workplace structures, practices, and patterns of interaction that inadvertently favour men" (Ely et al., 2011).

The literature review uncovered a number of factors that could be influencing gender diversity in companies. (See summary in table 2.). From all the factors noted, literature does not define which of these would promote or inhibit increased gender diversity levels and to what degree these factors can be regarded as promoters or inhibitors. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to identify the key organisational culture factors which are influencing gender diversity and the prevalence of these factors in companies. In addition, the research will attempt to uncover which of these factors are promoters and inhibitors as well as the strength of each factor in influencing increased gender diversity levels.

Table 2: Organisational culture factors

| Category | Factor |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Beliefs about gender / leaders | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Belief that men make better leaders2. Prevailing leadership styles3. Double bind |
| Workplace structures | <ol style="list-style-type: none">4. Long working hours equates to success5. Leadership positions requiring extensive travel6. Flexible time arrangements not compatible with leadership positions |
| Practices | <ol style="list-style-type: none">7. Leadership commitment and support on gender diversity8. Gender diversity issues driven by women leaders only9. Actual gender diversity levels in leadership10. Recruitment/replacement of leaders in similar image of current leaders11. Placement of women leaders in predominantly support functions12. Established, defined performance metrics and progression measures in place |
| Patterns of interaction | <ol style="list-style-type: none">13. Limited decision making power14. After-hour social gatherings with predominantly men |

3. Research Questions

This chapter specifies the need of conducting this research into the organisational culture factors influencing gender diversity levels in organisations. It builds on the findings within the literature review presented in chapter two, together with the findings and problem statement in chapter one.

The main objective of this research report is to identify the key organisational culture factors which are influencing gender diversity levels in companies, particularly in senior and top management levels. The purpose of this research is to construct, from empirical evidence, a practical framework that leaders in organisations can adapt to increase the gender diversity levels. The research will therefore also aim to identify which of these factors are promoting and inhibiting increased gender diversity levels in companies.

The literature review uncovered 14 different factors that impact gender diversity in organisations; however, there is a gap in the understanding of the factors that either enable or inhibit increased gender diversity levels in senior and top management positions. The following research questions therefore seek to understand what is considered a key promoter and inhibitor of increased gender diversity levels.

3.1. Research question one

What are the organisational culture factors *promoting* increased gender diversity levels in South African organisations?

3.2. Research question two

What are the organisational culture factors *inhibiting* increased gender diversity levels in South African organisations?

3.3. Research question three

What is the relative strength of each promoting and inhibiting factor respectively?

Building on research question one and two, this question aims to understand if there are certain organisational culture factors that impact on gender diversity levels more than others. It will be necessary to determine whether the promoting factors outweigh the inhibiting factors, so organisational leaders know what action to take to increase gender diversity levels.

4. Research Methodology

4.1. Research design

This study aims to explore the influence of organisational culture factors on gender diversity in senior and top management levels, and to understand which factors promote and inhibit increased gender diversity levels in companies. The research design method used was a quantitative descriptive study. Saunders and Lewis (2012) describe a descriptive study as research that aims to describe an accurate representation of persons, events or situations. Descriptive research involves the collection of quantifiable and measurable data to obtain quantitative responses, which are usually collected by questionnaire surveys (Saunders & Lewis, 2012).

Organisational culture is an accumulation of complex elements – assumptions, values, artefacts, behaviour, and leadership influence (Schein, 1984). The use of a quantitative descriptive study assisted to identify the key factors of organisation culture impacting gender diversity in senior and top management levels, as reviewed in the literature. A quantitative strategy was chosen because the researcher sought measurable verification on the breadth of factors that promote and inhibit increased gender diversity levels. The use of an explanatory study will assist in understanding the prevalence of these organisational culture factors in companies, with numbers providing a comparable outcome between companies with various levels of gender diversity.

Due to the limited time to complete this study, the research was cross-sectional. Saunders and Lewis (2012) recommend that this strategy be followed to collect data from participants at only one period in time. This will provide a "snapshot" of the impact of organisational culture on gender diversity and women at a particular point in time.

The research process took the form of a survey method. A survey involves the structured collection of data from a sizeable population (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). A questionnaire was used to allow the collection of data regarding gender diversity and organisational culture factors from a large number of women and men in a cost-effective manner (Saunders & Lewis, 2012).

4.2. Scope

The focus of the research is on the organisational culture factors influencing companies in achieving a gender diverse workforce, particularly in senior and top management levels. The research will also analyse which factors promote and inhibit increased

gender diversity levels in companies. The research has potential implications for both companies as well as women as they become more aware of the key factors adversely affecting gender diversity levels and career advancement.

4.3. Universe/population

Saunders and Lewis (2012) define a population as the complete set of group members. For this research study, the population will be female and male employees or managers who are employed in medium to large organisations predominantly based in South Africa. The population will not be bound by criteria related to the industry, years of experience and demographic variables such as age and race.

The population will include both female and male managers that have the insight and experience to be able to describe the organisational culture factors influencing gender diversity in senior and top management levels. Junior and middle management levels will also be included as this is ordinarily the start of the journey into senior and top management levels. The view of male managers will also be included in the analysis to obtain an impartial view of cultural factors impacting gender diversity levels.

4.4. Unit of analysis

The unit of analysis is the organisational culture factors which are influencing organisations in achieving gender diversity at senior and top management levels, and the prevalence of these factors in companies.

4.5. Sampling

Purposive sampling was used as a sampling technique. Firstly, a non-probability sampling method was chosen due to the researcher not having access to a sampling frame – the complete list of all population members (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). The researcher did not have access to a sampling frame that details all managers who have worked in medium to large organisations in South Africa.

Secondly, purposive sampling was employed to select a sample so that the researcher could judge who would best be able to help answer the research questions (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). To obtain insight into all research questions for this study pertaining to organisational culture factors, it was necessary to identify women and men who have the necessary experience in working in organisations as well as being able to provide relevant input for the research questions.

Thirdly, in order to obtain input for all research questions, purposive sampling was used to identify the key organisational culture factors influencing gender diversity and the prevalence of these factors in organisations. The underlying premise is that any patterns that emerge are likely to be of particular interest and value whilst representing key themes (Saunders & Lewis, 2012).

The variety of purposive sampling to be applied is a typical case, as the sample will be considered representative, though not statistically so (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). When considering the sample size, the researcher aimed to obtain responses from 60 to 100 employees and managers working in South African organisations, with 74 responses obtained. The sample selected was not bound by criteria related to the industry, years of experience and demographic variables.

4.6. Measurement instrument

The measurement instrument for this research study took the form of a questionnaire. A questionnaire is typically used for quantitative descriptive and explanatory research where data is collected about the same things from large numbers of respondents (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). The questionnaire was distributed by email with an electronic link to the online survey. The questionnaire was used because it is one of the most efficient ways to collect data as it typically contains fixed responses.

The organisational culture factors covered in the literature review formed the base of the questionnaire; however, there may be additional factors which have not been covered in the literature or which is specific to a respondent. This will warrant open questions where the response is unsure and an exploration of the additional factors in the findings of the research. A draft of the questionnaire is provided in Appendix 1.

For this research study, a combination of question types was used in the questionnaire. A rating question was used to answer the research questions where respondents were required to rate the prevalence of the organisational culture factors for their organisation. The factors presented in the questionnaire followed those identified in the literature review. Respondents were also asked to list and rate additional factors not presented in the questionnaire, which took the form of an open-ended question. This question aimed to address any factors that might not have been uncovered in the literature.

Respondents were asked to rate the prevalence of each organisational culture factor using a four-point Likert scale, where 1 equals "not prevalent at all" and 4 equals "very prevalent". This allowed for ease of comparison of each category of the respondent's distribution of scores or outcomes to each other.

"Reliability" is the extent to which data collection methods and analysis procedures will produce consistent findings (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). To ensure reliability, the researcher must be cognisant of subject error and subject bias. Saunders and Lewis (2012) describe this as external validity where the data collection method accurately measures what it was intended to measure and the research findings are what they profess to be. To ensure that there is enough data to answer all the research questions, the design of the questions needed to be clear in order to minimise misinterpretation during the completion of the survey.

"Content validity" is the extent to which a questionnaire provides enough data to answer the research questions, while "construct validity" is the extent that the questions will collect data about what is intended to be measured (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). To ensure that the questions are understood clearly and that the questions are not leading, a pilot-test was conducted with three managers currently working in South African organisations. Saunders and Lewis (2012) state that pilot testing will give an indication of possible problems with questions and the length of the interview. By conducting pilot tests with typical participants, each question was critically evaluated in terms of clarity. After the pilot test was done, certain questions were amended to make them simpler to understand, ensuring clarity for respondents.

4.7. Analysis

The collected data were captured into an Excel spreadsheet in the format of a data matrix and were coded for data analysis. The researcher received 74 responses, of which five were incomplete. The incomplete responses were removed from the dataset, which brought the total sample size down to 69. The statistical analysis software package, IBM SPSS Statistics, was used to calculate statistics and aid in presenting the data to be able to describe the data, display proportions and examine relationships between variables.

The results of the data presented in chapter five were analysed and interpreted using descriptive and inferential statistical analysis. The scaled responses allowed for various meanings to be derived and for relationships among variables to be explored. For

example, the relationship between each organisational culture factor and the level of gender diversity within the organisation was explored. Recommendations are based on the interpretation of the data analysed.

To answer research question three, a force field analysis was conducted to analyse and interpret the data obtained. This method organises information pertaining to the primary variable in two categories: forces for the primary variable and forces for resisting it (Cummings & Worley, 2009). The primary variable for this study is the gender diversity level.

The strength of the various factors were ranked in an attempt to determine whether the forces that promote increased gender diversity levels outweigh the forces that inhibit the increased gender diversity levels in organisations. This is done to strengthen the factors promoting increased gender diversity levels and reduce the impact of inhibiting factors.

4.8. Research limitations

Using non-probability purposive sampling with a small sample size does not necessarily represent the population statistically and impacts the data validity (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). The study was limited to South African organisations due to the geographic constraints of the researcher and access to the participants.

The researcher distributed surveys to participants within her personal and professional business networks, which potentially limited the industry and demographic range. The research aims to understand organisational culture factors influencing gender diversity which surpasses industry and demographics; however, some factors may be more prevalent in certain industries or demographics, which limits the ability to generalise the results across these variables.

As the survey comprised mainly closed-ended questions, it is possible that answers the respondent would not otherwise have chosen were suggested. Respondents with no option or no knowledge could have answered anyway and could even have been forced to make choices they would not necessarily have made.

5. Research Results

This chapter provides a presentation of the results obtained from the data collection and analysis phase. To answer the research questions posed in chapter three, both descriptive statistics and analytical data of the questionnaire will be presented and used to summarise the data. Descriptive statistics calculated will be presented first, and then the results of the reliability testing will be discussed. Thereafter, the analysis will be aligned to the research questions established in chapter three.

5.1. Description of data

The sampling technique that was used achieved a sample size of 69 responses to the questionnaire. The sample consisted of both females and males working in South African organisations, with responses from 35 females and 34 males.

5.1.1. Biographical information

It was important to establish the profile of respondents, as the insight and knowledge of respondents impacts the quality of responses. Certain biographical questions were posed. A summary of this information is provided in table three.

Table 3: Summary of biographical information

| Biographical category | Options | Percent |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------|---------|
| Gender | Female | 51% |
| | Male | 49% |
| Age | 20-29 | 12% |
| | 30-39 | 46% |
| | 40-49 | 33% |
| | 50-59 | 9% |
| Industry | Advertising & Marketing | 1% |
| | Airlines & Aerospace | 1% |
| | Automotive | 3% |
| | Construction, Machinery, and Homes | 1% |
| | Education | 3% |
| | Engineering & Mining | 10% |
| | Entertainment & Leisure | 1% |
| | Finance & Financial Services | 32% |
| | Food & Beverages | 3% |
| | Healthcare & Pharmaceuticals | 1% |
| | Insurance | 1% |
| | Manufacturing | 7% |

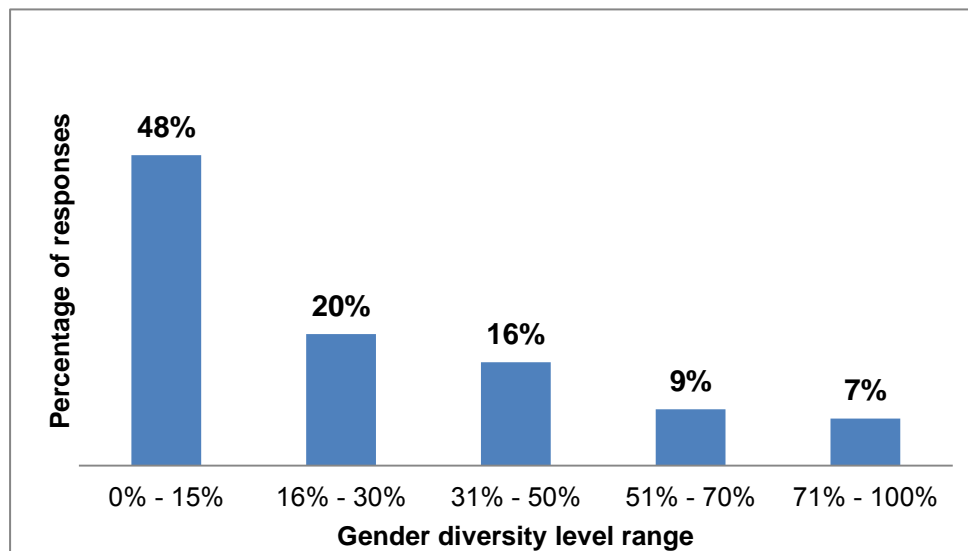
| | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------|-----------|
| | Non-profit | 1% |
| | Professional Services | 12% |
| | Real Estate | 1% |
| | Retail & Consumer Durables | 3% |
| | Telecommunications, Technology & Electronics | 12% |
| | Utilities, Energy, and Extraction | 4% |
| | | |
| Company Tenure | Average per respondent | 6.7 years |
| | | |
| Management Level | Executive management | 7% |
| | Senior management | 25% |
| | Middle management | 33% |
| | Junior management | 6% |
| | Non-management | 14% |
| | Specialist | 12% |
| | Owner | 3% |
| | | |
| Management Tenure | Average per respondent | 7.8 years |
| | | |
| Children | 0 | 51% |
| | 1-2 | 43% |
| | >2 | 6% |
| | | |
| Marital Status | Life partner | 6% |
| | Married | 52% |
| | Unmarried | 42% |

5.1.2. Gender diversity levels

Respondents were asked to provide the actual gender diversity levels in their organisation (indicated by the percentage of women in top management positions over total top management positions available). The results of the gender diversity levels are shown in figure two.

Five gender diversity level ranges were provided as options: 0-15%, 16-30%, 31-50%, 51-70% and 71-100%. The associated sample shows that 41% of respondents work in organisations with 0-15% gender diversity levels in top management, while only 7% of respondents work in organisations with more than 50% top management positions occupied by women.

Figure 2: Summary of gender diversity levels



5.1.3. Organisational culture factors

Based on the literature, 14 organisational culture factors were listed in the questionnaire and respondents were asked to rate the prevalence of each factor in their organisation. A four point Likert scale was provided to rate the prevalence as perceived by the respondent, with options including: "Not prevalent", "Rarely prevalent", "Somewhat prevalent", and "Very prevalent". The results are displayed in Appendix 2.

For the purposes of this study, "Not prevalent" and "Rarely prevalent" are combined and the same will be done for "Somewhat prevalent" and "Very prevalent". The combined categories will be referred to as "Rarely prevalent" and "Very prevalent" respectively. Reducing the number of options for prevalence will allow comparison across two groups, and assist in a more streamlined approach to determining promoters and inhibitors of gender diversity.

The results of the organisational culture factor ratings are shown in figure three. Statements for factors rated as "Very prevalent" by more than 60% of respondents included:

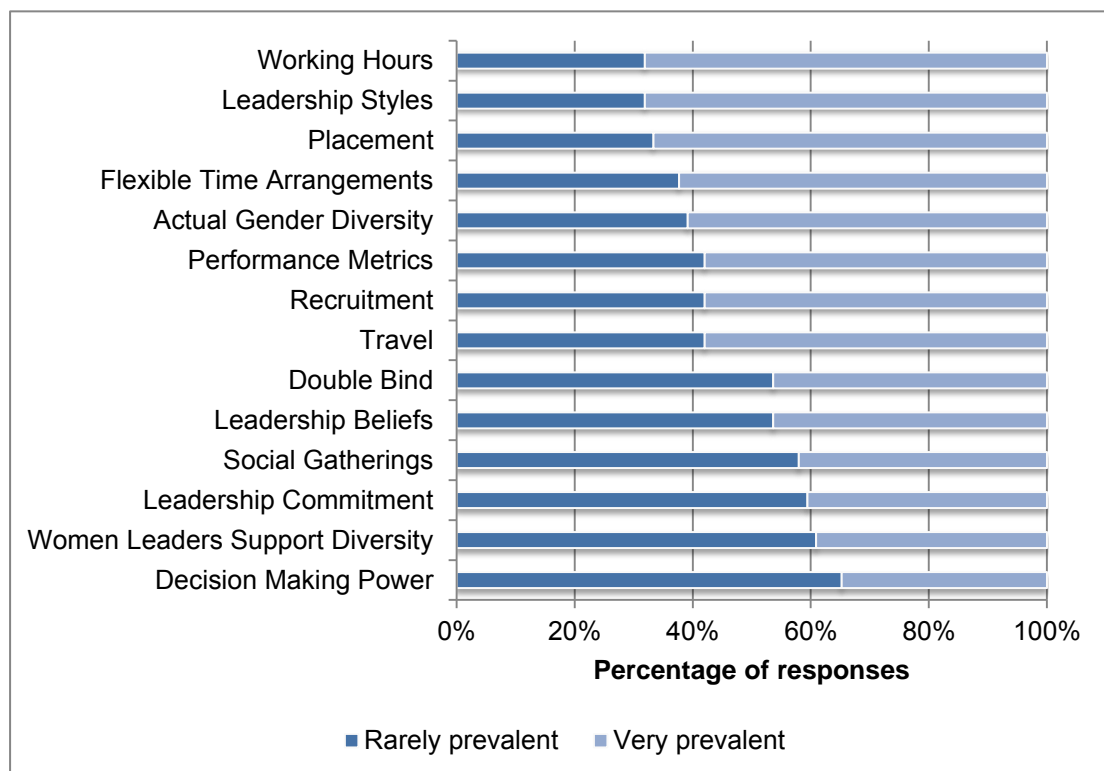
- Long working hours equates to success
- The dominant leadership styles display stereotypical traits of masculinity (i.e. authority, ambitious, tough, arrogance, etc.).

- Women managers generally occupy support roles (for example, human resources, finance and other internal-facing roles).
- Flexible time arrangements are not suitable for leadership positions in the company (for example, it is not feasible to work half-day, as leaders are expected to be continually present)
- The actual gender diversity level in the company's senior leadership is very low.

Statements for factors rated as "Rarely prevalent" by more than 60% of respondents included:

- It is perceived that women have limited decision-making power and the ability to influence decisions at the top of the organisation.
- Gender diversity issues are driven by women leaders only.

Figure 3: Rating of organisational culture factors in organisations



To establish the effect of gender on the result, the ratings were analysed per gender. The factors rated very prevalent are shown per gender in table four. Overall, the percentage of females rating factors very prevalent is higher than the percentage of males who rated very prevalent. In addition, eight factors were rated very prevalent

by more than 60% of females compared to two factors rated very prevalent by more than 60% of males.

Table 4: Organisational culture factors rated "very prevalent" by gender

| Factor | Female | Male |
|----------------------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Women Leaders Support Diversity | 37% | 41% |
| Leadership Commitment | 46% | 35% |
| Decision Making Power | 49% | 21% |
| Social Gatherings | 54% | 29% |
| Double Bind | 54% | 38% |
| Travel | 57% | 59% |
| Leadership Beliefs | 60% | 32% |
| Recruitment | 60% | 56% |
| Flexible Time Arrangements | 63% | 62% |
| Actual Gender Diversity | 66% | 56% |
| Performance Metrics | 69% | 47% |
| Placement | 74% | 59% |
| Working Hours | 74% | 62% |
| Leadership Styles | 77% | 59% |

To determine if there were any other organisational culture factors omitted from the list based on the literature review, respondents were asked to provide additional factors that they have experienced in their organisations. This was an open-ended question and respondents were allowed multiple responses to provide additional factors. The frequency of specific responses was calculated and all additional factors were rated as "very prevalent". The results of the frequency are shown in table five. Not included in table five are 15 responses which reconfirmed the originally listed factors already provided in the questionnaire.

Table 5: Additional organisational culture factors

| Additional Factor | Count of responses |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Race discrimination | 4 |
| Compliance to BEE | 1 |
| Familiarity with senior people | 1 |
| Male-dominated industry | 1 |
| Male-dominated legacy | 1 |
| National culture | 1 |
| Nepotism | 1 |
| Queen bee syndrome | 1 |
| Salary differentials | 1 |
| Societal standings | 1 |
| Gender jokes | 1 |

5.2. Testing reliability

To answer the research questions proposed in chapter three, the researcher needed to determine whether the statements that constitute a factor were reliable. Reliability tests were implemented and the results of the testing are provided in table six.

The entire set of 14 items yields a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.852. Ideally, the Cronbach Alpha coefficient of a scale should be above 0.7 and indicates that the scale's internal consistency is reliable. Since the alpha is above 0.7, the scale can be considered reliable with this sample.

Table 6: Results of reliability test using Cronbach's Alpha

| | Factor | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted |
|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| 1 | There is an underlying belief that men make better leaders | 0.832 |
| 2 | The dominant leadership styles display stereotypical traits of masculinity (i.e. authority, ambitious, tough, arrogance, etc.) | 0.840 |
| 3 | Women managers who display "masculine" leadership traits are labelled as "too aggressive" while those who display "feminine" leadership traits are labelled as "too soft" | 0.838 |
| 4 | Long working hours equates to success | 0.850 |
| 5 | Senior leadership positions require extensive travel | 0.857 |
| 6 | Flexible-time arrangements are not suitable for leadership positions in the company (for example, it is not feasible to work half-day, as leaders are expected to be continually present) | 0.861 |
| 7 | Leadership commitment and support regarding gender diversity is lacking | 0.834 |
| 8 | Gender diversity issues are driven by women leaders only | 0.839 |
| 9 | The actual gender diversity levels in the company's senior leadership is very low | 0.844 |
| 10 | Recruiting managers tend to choose people who are similar to the leaders they are replacing | 0.845 |
| 11 | Women managers generally occupy support roles (for example, human resources, finance and other internal-facing roles) | 0.834 |
| 12 | There is poor articulation of critical factors required to qualify someone for senior management positions | 0.838 |
| 13 | It is perceived that women have limited decision making power and the ability to influence decisions at the top of the organisation | 0.836 |
| 14 | Social gatherings are composed mostly of men, happen after hours, centred on "masculine" activities | 0.846 |

5.3. Tests used to answer research questions

To streamline the analysis of the study, and to understand the impact of organisational culture factors on gender diversity levels, the number of categories was collapsed for the variable Gender diversity levels. From the five options provided for this variable, the sample was collapsed into two options to create two groups. These two groups represent low diversity levels (0%-15%) and medium to high diversity levels (15%-100%).

The associated sample is 33 respondents who work in organisations with 0%-15% gender diversity level in top management and 36 respondents who work in organisations with 16%-100% gender diversity level in top management. Therefore, the size of each group is 33 and 36 respectively and will be referred to as "Low" and "High" gender diversity levels in this study. To an extent, these groups represent the state of South African organisations where the proportion of women in top management levels is reported as 20% (Department of Labour Republic of South Africa, 2013).

A descriptive statistical tool was used to determine if a relationship exists between the two groups and the organisational culture factors. An independent sample t-test was employed to determine whether the mean (average) scores of the 14 factors differ between the two groups. These average scores will disclose the differences in perception regarding the promoters and inhibitors of the two groups, if they exist.

For each factor, it would need to be concluded that the null hypothesis (H₀) would be no different in the means of the two groups. The alternative hypothesis (H₁) would be that a difference in means exist between each of the 14 factors and the two groups.

In order to establish whether there was sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that the research hypothesis is supported by the data, the probability value (p-value) was used in the t-test. This measures the statistical significance of a hypothesis test and indicates the probability that an association exists. A p-value of less than 0.05 indicates that the null hypothesis can be rejected, meaning the results are statistically significant.

5.4. Results for research question one

Research question one aimed to understand the organisational culture factors promoting increased gender diversity levels in South African organisations. To test

whether the difference in means was statistically significant to support the hypothesis, a p-value of 0.05 was used for all t-tests.

In analysing the p-value, the researcher also took into account the Levene's test for equality of variances which tests whether the variability of scores for each of the groups is similar. Where the significance value for this test was greater than 0.05, equal variances were assumed and the relevant t-test p-value was used for interpretation. If the significance value for this test was less than 0.05, equal variances were not assumed and the relevant t-test p-value was used for interpretation.

The hypotheses for each of the factors are:

H0: There is no difference in the organisational culture factor for organisations with low gender diversity levels and organisations with high gender diversity levels.

H1: There is a significant difference in the organisational culture factor for organisations with low and high gender diversity levels.

In the questionnaire, each of the factors were phrased as statements for respondents to rate the prevalence of the factor in their organisation. The four ratings were coded, where 1 was "Not prevalent" and 4 was "Very prevalent". A higher rating would therefore be expected to associate with a lower gender diversity level.

To determine which of the factors are the noticeable promoters of gender diversity levels in organisations, the mid-point of the 4-point Likert scale, namely 2.5, was arbitrarily chosen as the dividing line between "Not/Rarely Prevalent" and "Somewhat/Very Prevalent". The value 2.5 is also the mean in statistical terms, as it is the sum of all the data values divided by the number of data values.

To establish whether the factor is a possible promoter of increased gender diversity levels, the researcher observed the means for the group of respondents with high gender diversity levels in their organisation. If the mean for a factor is 2.5 and below, it indicates that the factor is not as prevalent and therefore is a promoter of increased gender diversity levels when the factor is less prevalent in the organisation.

5.4.1. Results for "Leadership Beliefs"

For the statement "there is an underlying belief that men make better leaders", the mean for the "Low" group revealed 2.64 and the "High" group was 1.97. This illustrates that this factor is a promoter of increased gender diversity levels when it is

less prevalent in an organisation. The p-value of 0.01 indicates that the null hypothesis can be rejected, and it can be concluded that there is a statistically significant difference in the organisational culture factor for organisations with low and high gender diversity levels.

Table 7: Statistical results for Leadership Beliefs

| Factor | | 0%-15% (Low) | 16%-100% (High) |
|--------------------|---------|--------------|-----------------|
| Leadership Beliefs | Mean | 2.64 | 1.97 |
| | Std Dev | 0.96 | 0.97 |

| Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | |
|-----------------------------------------|------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| F | Sig. | t | Sig. (2-tailed) |
| 0.00 | 0.96 | 2.85 | 0.01 |

5.4.2. Results for "Leadership Styles"

For the statement "the dominant leadership styles display stereotypical traits of masculinity", the mean for the "Low" group revealed 3.06 and the "High" group was 2.50. This illustrates that this factor is possibly a promoter of increased gender diversity levels when it is less prevalent in an organisation. The p-value of 0.02 indicates that the null hypothesis can be rejected, and it can be concluded that there is a statistically significant difference in the organisational culture factor for organisations with low and high gender diversity levels.

Table 8: Statistical results for Leadership Styles

| Factor | | 0% - 15% (Low) | 16% - 100% (High) |
|-------------------|---------|----------------|-------------------|
| Leadership Styles | Mean | 3.06 | 2.50 |
| | Std Dev | 0.90 | 1.03 |

| Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | |
|-----------------------------------------|------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| F | Sig. | t | Sig. (2-tailed) |
| 3.70 | 0.06 | 2.40 | 0.02 |

5.4.3. Results for "Double Bind"

For the statement "women managers who display 'masculine' leadership traits are labelled as 'too aggressive' while those who display 'feminine' leadership traits are labelled as 'too soft'", the mean for the "Low" group revealed 2.55 and the "High" group was 2.19. This illustrates that this factor is possibly a promoter of increased

gender diversity levels when it is less prevalent in an organisation. However, the p-value of 0.15 indicates that the null hypothesis cannot be rejected, and that there is no statistically significant difference in the organisational culture factor for organisations with low and high gender diversity levels.

Table 9: Statistical results for Double Bind

| Factor | | 0%-15% (Low) | 16%-100% (High) |
|-------------|---------|--------------|-----------------|
| Double Bind | Mean | 2.55 | 2.19 |
| | Std Dev | 0.97 | 1.04 |

| Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | |
|-----------------------------------------|------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| F | Sig. | t | Sig. (2-tailed) |
| 0.07 | 0.80 | 01.45 | 0.15 |

5.4.4. Results for "Working Hours"

For the statement "long working hours equates to success", the mean for the "Low" group revealed 3.03 and the "High" group was 2.72. This illustrates that this factor is not necessarily a promoter of increased gender diversity levels in an organisation. The p-value of 0.22 confirms this, which indicates that the null hypothesis cannot be rejected and it can be concluded that there is no statistically significant difference in the organisational culture factor for organisations with low and high gender diversity levels.

Table 10: Statistical results for Working Hours

| Factor | | 0%-15% (Low) | 16%-100% (High) |
|---------------|---------|--------------|-----------------|
| Working Hours | Mean | 3.03 | 2.72 |
| | Std Dev | 1.07 | 1.00 |

| Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | |
|-----------------------------------------|------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| F | Sig. | t | Sig. (2-tailed) |
| 0.01 | 0.91 | 1.23 | 0.22 |

5.4.5. Results for "Travel"

For the statement "senior leadership positions require extensive travel", the mean for the "Low" group revealed 2.91 and the "High" group was 2.44. This illustrates that this factor is a promoter of increased gender diversity levels when it is less prevalent in an organisation. The p-value of 0.04 indicates that the null hypothesis can be

rejected, and it can be concluded that there is a statistically significant difference in the organisational culture factor for organisations with low and high gender diversity levels.

Table 11: Statistical results for Travel

| Factor | | 0%-15% (Low) | 16%-100% (High) |
|--------|---------|--------------|-----------------|
| Travel | Mean | 2.91 | 2.44 |
| | Std Dev | 0.95 | 0.94 |

| Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | |
|-----------------------------------------|------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| F | Sig. | t | Sig. (2-tailed) |
| 0.30 | 0.59 | 2.04 | 0.04 |

5.4.6. Results for "Flexible Time Arrangements"

For the statement "flexible time arrangements are not suitable for leadership positions in the company", the mean for the "Low" group revealed 2.88 and the "High" group was 2.44. This illustrates that this factor is possibly a promoter of increased gender diversity levels when it is less prevalent in an organisation. However, the p-value of 0.10 indicates that the null hypothesis cannot be rejected and that there is no statistically significant difference in the organisational culture factor for organisations with low and high gender diversity levels.

Table 12: Statistical results for Flexible Time Arrangements

| Factor | | 0%-15% (Low) | 16%-100% (High) |
|----------------------------|---------|--------------|-----------------|
| Flexible Time Arrangements | Mean | 2.88 | 2.44 |
| | Std Dev | 1.08 | 1.05 |

| Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | |
|-----------------------------------------|------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| F | Sig. | t | Sig. (2-tailed) |
| 0.30 | 0.58 | 1.69 | 0.10 |

5.4.7. Results for "Leadership Commitment"

For the statement "leadership commitment and support regarding gender diversity is lacking", the mean for the "Low" group revealed 2.7 and the "High" group was 1.86. This illustrates that this factor is a promoter of increased gender diversity levels when it is less prevalent in an organisation. The p-value of 0.00 indicates that the null hypothesis can be rejected, and it can be concluded that there is a statistically

significant difference in the organisational culture factor for organisations with low and high gender diversity levels.

Table 13: Statistical results for Leadership Commitment

| Factor | | 0%-15% (Low) | 16%-100% (High) |
|-----------------------|---------|--------------|-----------------|
| Leadership Commitment | Mean | 2.70 | 1.86 |
| | Std Dev | 1.07 | 0.76 |

| Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | |
|-----------------------------------------|------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| F | Sig. | t | Sig. (2-tailed) |
| 6.15 | 0.02 | 3.70 | 0.00 |

5.4.8. Results for "Women Leaders Support Diversity"

For the statement "gender diversity issues are driven by women leaders only", the mean for the "Low" group revealed 2.33 and the "High" group was 1.97. This illustrates that this factor is possibly a promoter of increased gender diversity levels when it is less prevalent in an organisation. It is also noted that the mean for the low group is less than 2.5. However, the p-value of 0.16 indicates that the null hypothesis cannot be rejected, and that there is no statistically significant difference in the organisational culture factor for organisations with low and high gender diversity levels.

Table 14: Statistical results for Women Leaders Support Diversity

| Factor | | 0%-15% (Low) | 16%- 100% (High) |
|---------------------------------|---------|--------------|------------------|
| Women Leaders Support Diversity | Mean | 2.33 | 1.97 |
| | Std Dev | 1.16 | 0.91 |

| Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | |
|-----------------------------------------|------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| F | Sig. | t | Sig. (2-tailed) |
| 5.19 | 0.03 | 1.43 | 0.16 |

5.4.9. Results for "Actual Gender Diversity"

For the statement "the actual gender diversity level in the company's senior leadership is very low", the mean for the "Low" group revealed 3.39 and the "High" group was 2.19. This illustrates that this factor is a promoter of increased gender diversity levels when it is less prevalent in an organisation. The p-value of 0.00 indicates that the null hypothesis can be rejected, and it can be concluded that there

is a statistically significant difference in the organisational culture factor for organisations with low and high gender diversity levels.

Table 15: Statistical results for Actual Gender Diversity

| Factor | | 0% - 15% (Low) | 16% - 100% (High) |
|-------------------------|---------|----------------|-------------------|
| Actual Gender Diversity | Mean | 3.39 | 2.19 |
| | Std Dev | 0.86 | 0.98 |

| Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | |
|-----------------------------------------|------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| F | Sig. | t | Sig. (2-tailed) |
| 0.85 | 0.36 | 5.37 | 0.00 |

5.4.10. Results for "Recruitment"

For the statement "recruiting managers tend to choose people who are similar to the leaders they are replacing", the mean for the "Low" group revealed 2.85 and the "High" group was 2.39. This illustrates that this factor is a promoter of increased gender diversity levels when it is less prevalent in an organisation. The p-value of 0.04 indicates that the null hypothesis can be rejected, and it can be concluded that there is a statistically significant difference in the organisational culture factor for organisations with low and high gender diversity levels.

Table 16: Statistical results for Recruitment

| Factor | | 0%-15% (Low) | 16%-100% (High) |
|-------------|---------|--------------|-----------------|
| Recruitment | Mean | 2.85 | 2.39 |
| | Std Dev | 0.94 | 0.84 |

| Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | |
|-----------------------------------------|------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| F | Sig. | t | Sig. (2-tailed) |
| 0.00 | 0.97 | 2.15 | 0.04 |

5.4.11. Results for "Placement"

For the statement "women managers generally occupy support roles", the mean for the "Low" group revealed 3.33 and the "High" group was 2.56. This illustrates that this factor is not necessarily a promoter of increased gender diversity levels when it is less prevalent in an organisation. The p-value of 0.00 indicates that the null hypothesis can be rejected, and it can be concluded that there is a statistically

significant difference in the organisational culture factor for organisations with low and high gender diversity levels.

Table 17: Statistical results for Placement

| Factor | | 0%-15% (Low) | 16%-100% (High) |
|-----------|---------|--------------|-----------------|
| Placement | Mean | 3.33 | 2.56 |
| | Std Dev | 0.89 | 1.03 |

| Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | |
|-----------------------------------------|------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| F | Sig. | t | Sig. (2-tailed) |
| 1.04 | 0.31 | 3.35 | 0.00 |

5.4.12. Results for "Performance Metrics"

For the statement "there is poor articulation of critical factors required to qualify someone for senior management positions", the mean for the "Low" group revealed 2.73 and the "High" group was 2.50. This illustrates that this factor is possibly a promoter of increased gender diversity levels when it is less prevalent in an organisation. However, the p-value of 0.38 indicates that the null hypothesis cannot be rejected, and that there is no statistically significant difference in the organisational culture factor for organisations with low and high gender diversity levels.

Table 18: Statistical results for Performance Metrics

| Factor | | 0%-15% (Low) | 16%-100% (High) |
|---------------------|---------|--------------|-----------------|
| Performance Metrics | Mean | 2.73 | 2.50 |
| | Std Dev | 1.15 | 0.97 |

| Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | |
|-----------------------------------------|------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| F | Sig. | t | Sig. (2-tailed) |
| 1.75 | 0.19 | 0.89 | 0.38 |

5.4.13. Results for "Decision-Making Power"

For the statement "it is perceived that women have limited decision making power and the ability to influence decisions at the top of the organisation", the mean for the "Low" group revealed 2.45 and the "High group" was 1.86. This illustrates that this factor is a promoter of increased gender diversity levels when it is less prevalent in an organisation. However, it is noted that the mean for the low group is less than 2.5.

The p-value of 0.01 indicates that the null hypothesis can be rejected, and it can be concluded that there is a statistically significant difference in the organisational culture factor for organisations with low and high gender diversity levels.

Table 19: Statistical results for Decision Making Power

| Factor | | 0%-15% (Low) | 16%-100% (High) |
|-----------------------|---------|--------------|-----------------|
| Decision Making Power | Mean | 2.45 | 1.86 |
| | Std Dev | 1.03 | 0.83 |

| Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | |
|-----------------------------------------|------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| F | Sig. | t | Sig. (2-tailed) |
| 3.57 | 0.06 | 2.64 | 0.01 |

5.4.14. Results for "Social Gatherings"

For the statement "social gatherings are composed mostly of men, happen after hours, centred on 'masculine' activities", the mean for the "Low" group revealed 2.48 and the "High" group was 1.97. This illustrates that this factor is a promoter of increased gender diversity levels when it is less prevalent in an organisation. However, it is noted that the mean for the low group is less than 2.5. The p-value of 0.04 indicates that the null hypothesis can be rejected, and it can be concluded that there is a statistically significant difference in the organisational culture factor for organisations with low and high gender diversity levels.

Table 20: Statistical results for Social Gatherings

| Factor | | 0%-15% (Low) | 16%-100% (High) |
|-------------------|---------|--------------|-----------------|
| Social Gatherings | Mean | 2.48 | 1.97 |
| | Std Dev | 1.12 | 0.94 |

| Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | |
|-----------------------------------------|------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| F | Sig. | t | Sig. (2-tailed) |
| 2.24 | 0.14 | 2.06 | 0.04 |

5.4.15. Summary of results for research question one

A summary of the results for research question one is shown in table 21. From these results, the researcher was able to compile a list of promoters of gender diversity levels for each group. On average, the "High" group has a mean of 2.5 or less for all except two factors. This illustrates that this group has 11 factors to be possible

promoters of increased gender diversity levels. It is also noted that the "Low" group has a mean of 2.5 or less for three factors. This illustrates that this group has three factors to be possible promoters of increased gender diversity levels.

The t-tests revealed significant differences in means for nine factors and insignificant differences for five factors. Of these nine factors, the mean for "Placement" is greater than 2.5 for the "High" group, which could indicate that this factor is not necessarily a promoter for increased gender diversity levels.

Table 21: Summary of t-tests for promoters

| Significant difference | Factor | Group | | | | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|---------|-----------------|-------------------|---------|
| | | 0%-15% (Low) | | | 16%-100% (High) | | |
| | | N | Mean ¹ | Std Dev | N | Mean ¹ | Std Dev |
| Yes | Leadership Commitment | 33 | 2.70 | 1.07 | 36 | 1.86 | 0.76 |
| | Decision Making Power | 33 | 2.45 | 1.03 | 36 | 1.86 | 0.83 |
| | Leadership Beliefs | 33 | 2.64 | 0.96 | 36 | 1.97 | 0.97 |
| | Social Gatherings | 33 | 2.48 | 1.12 | 36 | 1.97 | 0.94 |
| | Actual Gender Diversity | 33 | 3.39 | 0.86 | 36 | 2.19 | 0.98 |
| | Recruitment | 33 | 2.85 | 0.94 | 36 | 2.39 | 0.84 |
| | Travel | 33 | 2.91 | 0.95 | 36 | 2.44 | 0.94 |
| | Leadership Styles | 33 | 3.06 | 0.90 | 36 | 2.50 | 1.03 |
| | Placement | 33 | 3.33 | 0.89 | 36 | 2.56 | 1.03 |
| No | Women Leaders Support Diversity | 33 | 2.33 | 1.16 | 36 | 1.97 | 0.91 |
| | Double Bind | 33 | 2.55 | 0.97 | 36 | 2.19 | 1.04 |
| | Flexible Time Arrangements | 33 | 2.88 | 1.08 | 36 | 2.44 | 1.05 |
| | Performance Metrics | 33 | 2.73 | 1.15 | 36 | 2.50 | 0.97 |
| | Working Hours | 33 | 3.03 | 1.07 | 36 | 2.72 | 1.00 |

1. Bold numbers indicate mean is 2.5 or less

5.5. Results for research question two

Research question two aimed to understand the organisational culture factors inhibiting increased gender diversity levels in South African organisations. To test whether the difference in means was statistically significant to support the hypothesis, a p-value of 0.05 was used for all t-tests. The same t-tests were employed as for research question one to determine the inhibitors of increased gender diversity levels in organisations.

To determine which of the factors are the noticeable inhibitors of gender diversity levels in organisations, the mid-point of the 4-point Likert scale, namely 2.5, was arbitrarily chosen as the dividing line between "Not/Rarely Prevalent" and "Somewhat/Very Prevalent". The value 2.5 is also the mean in statistical terms, as it is the sum of all the data values divided by the number of data values.

To establish whether the factor is a possible inhibitor of increased gender diversity levels, the researcher observed the means for the group of respondents with low gender diversity levels in their organisation. If the mean for a factor is above 2.5, it indicates that the factor is prevalent and therefore is an inhibitor of increased gender diversity levels when the factor is prevalent in the organisation.

A summary of the results for research question two is shown in table 22. From these results, the researcher was able to compile a list of inhibitors of gender diversity levels for each group. On average, the "Low" group has a mean of greater than 2.5 for 10 factors. This illustrates that this group has 10 factors that could possibly be inhibitors of increased gender diversity levels. It is also noted that the "High" group has a mean greater than 2.5 for two factors. This illustrates that this group has three factors to be possible promoters of increased gender diversity levels.

The t-tests revealed significant differences in means for nine factors and insignificant differences for five factors. Of these nine factors, the means for "Social Gatherings" and "Decision Making Power" are less than 2.5, which could indicate that these factors are not necessarily inhibitors for increased gender diversity levels.

Table 22: Summary of t-tests for inhibitors

| Significant difference | Factor | Group | | | | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|---------|-----------------|-------------------|---------|
| | | 0%-15% (Low) | | | 16%-100% (High) | | |
| | | N | Mean ¹ | Std Dev | N | Mean ¹ | Std Dev |
| Yes | Actual Gender Diversity | 33 | 3.39 | 0.86 | 36 | 2.19 | 0.98 |
| | Placement | 33 | 3.33 | 0.89 | 36 | 2.56 | 1.03 |
| | Leadership Styles | 33 | 3.06 | 0.90 | 36 | 2.50 | 1.03 |
| | Travel | 33 | 2.91 | 0.95 | 36 | 2.44 | 0.94 |
| | Recruitment | 33 | 2.85 | 0.94 | 36 | 2.39 | 0.84 |
| | Leadership Commitment | 33 | 2.70 | 1.07 | 36 | 1.86 | 0.76 |
| | Leadership Beliefs | 33 | 2.64 | 0.96 | 36 | 1.97 | 0.97 |
| | Social Gatherings | 33 | 2.48 | 1.12 | 36 | 1.97 | 0.94 |
| | Decision Making Power | 33 | 2.45 | 1.03 | 36 | 1.86 | 0.83 |
| No | Working Hours | 33 | 3.03 | 1.07 | 36 | 2.72 | 1.00 |
| | Flexible Time Arrangements | 33 | 2.88 | 1.08 | 36 | 2.44 | 1.05 |
| | Performance Metrics | 33 | 2.73 | 1.15 | 36 | 2.50 | 0.97 |
| | Double Bind | 33 | 2.55 | 0.97 | 36 | 2.19 | 1.04 |
| | Women Leaders Support Diversity | 33 | 2.33 | 1.16 | 36 | 1.97 | 0.91 |

1. Bold numbers indicate mean is greater than 2.5

5.6. Results for research question three

Research question three aimed to understand the relative strength of each promoting and inhibiting factor respectively. Table 23 represents the number of responses per group for each factor for which a statistical significance was found as represented in table 21. "Inhibitors" represent those who responded "Somewhat and very prevalent" while "promoters" represent responses for "Not and rarely prevalent".

The relative strengths were calculated as the difference between the inhibitor and promoter score, divided by the sample size for the relevant group. Therefore, a high positive value indicates strength for this factor as a promoter in the "High" group, and similarly as an inhibitor for the "Low" group.

Table 23: Values of relative strengths

| Factor | Inhibitors (% of respondents) | | Promoters (% of respondents) | | Relative Strengths | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|------|------------------------------|------|--------------------|------|
| | Low | High | Low | High | Low | High |
| Leadership Styles | 82% | 56% | 18% | 44% | -64% | -11% |
| Placement | 79% | 56% | 21% | 44% | -58% | -11% |
| Travel | 70% | 47% | 30% | 53% | -39% | 6% |
| Recruitment | 73% | 44% | 27% | 56% | -45% | 11% |
| Actual Gender Diversity | 82% | 42% | 18% | 58% | -64% | 17% |
| Social Gatherings | 48% | 36% | 52% | 64% | 3% | 28% |
| Leadership Beliefs | 61% | 33% | 39% | 67% | -21% | 33% |
| Leadership Commitment | 61% | 22% | 39% | 78% | -21% | 56% |
| Decision Making Power | 48% | 22% | 52% | 78% | 3% | 56% |

A graphical representation of the relative strengths is displayed in figure four, with factors listed ranking promoters from largest to smallest. The technique used is that of a force-field Analysis, with the horizontal axis as the scale that measures the prevalence of an organisational culture factor ranging from inhibitors on the left to promoters on the right. The relative strength of each factor per group is reflected on the legend to the right of the graphs and is represented by the length of each factor drawn as a bar. This value illustrates what factors to improve on (promoters) and what factors to reduce influence on (inhibitors) simultaneously.

Figure 4: Relative Strengths for Promoters and Inhibitors

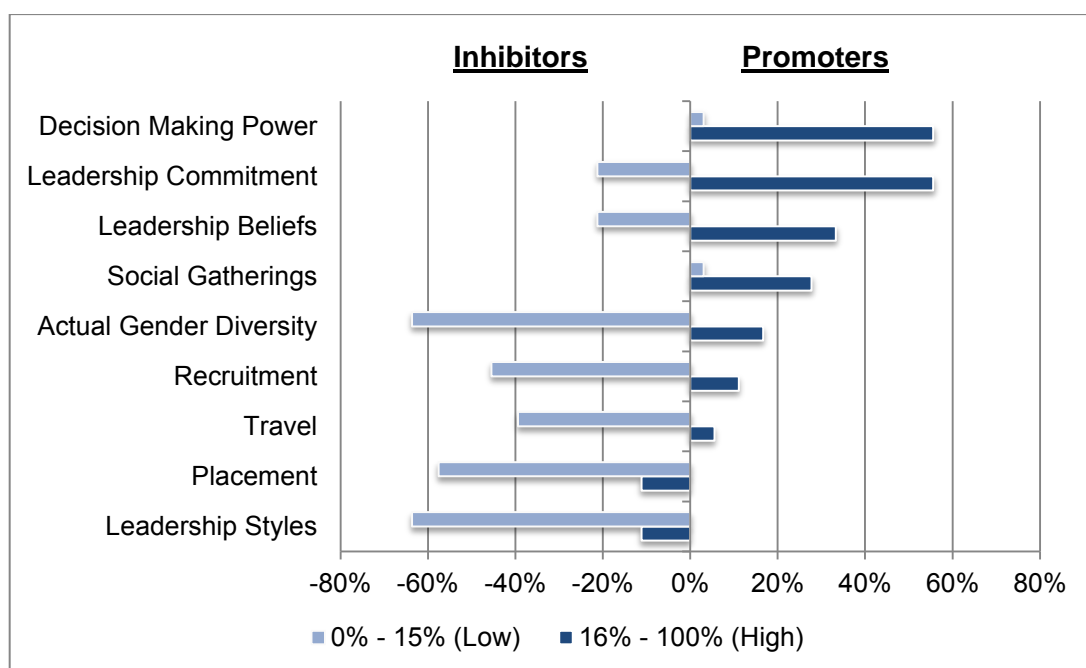


Figure four indicates that respondents working in organisations with "High" gender diversity levels found the strongest promoters for increased gender diversity to be "Decision Making Power" and "Leadership Commitment". This is illustrated by the dark blue bars where 56% more respondents in this group stated that these factors are not/rarely prevalent in their organisations. "Leadership Beliefs" and "Social Gatherings" followed as promoting factors in the "High" group where 33% and 28% more respondents rated these as not/rarely prevalent respectively. Fewer respondents rated "Placement" and "Leadership Styles" as not/rarely prevalent, with 11% more respondents rating these as somewhat/very prevalent.

Respondents in organisations with "Low" gender diversity levels indicated "Actual Gender Diversity", "Leadership Styles" and "Placement" to be strong inhibiting factors, and 58-64% more respondents rated these as somewhat/very prevalent compared to rating it as not/rarely prevalent. "Recruitment" and "Travel" closely followed as inhibiting factors with 45% and 39% more respondents rating these factors as somewhat/very prevalent. Fewer respondents rated "Decision Making Power" and "Social Gatherings" as somewhat/very prevalent, with 3% more respondents rating these as not/rarely prevalent.

6. Discussion of results

The purpose of this chapter is to answer the research questions as stated in chapter three. The preceding chapter presented the outcome of the statistical results, using the output of the questionnaire completed by a sample of 69 respondents. The research findings will be discussed in more detail in this chapter and will interpret the results based on the literature review conducted in chapter two. The results are discussed per research question.

6.1. Research question one

Research question one aimed to understand the organisational culture factors *promoting* increased gender diversity levels in South African organisations. The survey questions asked the respondent to rate the prevalence of the organisational culture factors within their organisation, as well as to select the level of gender diversity. In order to determine the promoting factors, those responses with a gender diversity level of 15%-100% were grouped. The ratings for factors were averaged and any factor with an average rating of 2.5 or less was considered a promoting factor. The results are discussed per factor with reference made to table 21.

6.1.1. "Leadership Beliefs"

On average, respondents working in organisations with higher gender diversity levels stated that the underlying belief that men make better leaders is *less* prevalent in their organisations. This result defies the assumption that derives from the perception of a leader needing to have certain characteristics which are often exhibited by men. Eagly and Carli (2007) noted some studies which affirmed that women and men are linked with different traits, and related men with more of the traits that connote leadership.

Gender stereotypes tend to be deeply embedded in society and follow women and men into the workplace (Hofmeyr & Mzobe, 2012). The average for the "High" respondent group was 1.97, as shown in table 21. This result affirms that when the belief or assumption regarding leadership traits are more "gender-neutral", women could be more encouraged to reach senior management levels in the organisation, therefore leading to an increase in levels of gender diversity.

6.1.2. "Leadership Styles"

Respondents working in organisations with higher gender diversity levels stated that the dominant leadership styles display *less* stereotypical traits of masculinity in their organisations. Male leadership has typically been referred to as being more authoritarian, having less emotion, and being able to see the bigger picture (Gallant, 2014). Women are perceived as being better listeners, having more empathy and higher orientation to collaborative working while their male counterparts are more ambitious and aggressive (Sandler, 2014).

The average for the "High" respondent group was 2.50, which is the borderline to indicate whether this is a promoting factor for increased gender diversity levels. Women leaders sometimes surrender the leadership role to men even when they demonstrate the leadership behaviour that is superior, because women themselves believe that being masculine displays more leadership characteristics (Toh & Leonardelli, 2012). Although the rating is borderline, it does somewhat support the literature that women leaders would be more willing to pursue senior leadership positions when the dominant leadership styles display less masculine traits.

6.1.3. "Double Bind"

Respondents in the "High" group rated the double bind effect as *less* prevalent in their organisations. The notion that women managers who display "masculine" leadership traits are labelled as "too aggressive" while those who display "feminine" leadership traits are labelled as "too soft" is not displayed in these organisations.

Women who are seen as "too tough" are labelled "aggressive", while their female colleagues are viewed as "too soft", which results in a damned-if-she-does and damned-if-she-doesn't double bind (Beeson & Valerio, 2012). This creates the impression that women leaders are perceived as "never just right" (Evans, 2011).

The average for the "High" respondent group was 2.19, which affirms that when these perceptions are not as prevalent in the organisation, women leaders are not placed in the double bind, and essentially are not judged differently from their male counterparts. However, the t-test revealed that this factor was not significantly different between the "Low" and "High" group. This indicates that the double bind is not a factor in promoting or inhibiting increased gender diversity levels.

6.1.4. "Working Hours"

On average, the "High" group rated "long working hours equates to success" as *more* prevalent in their organisations. Success is still associated with long hours and a heavy commitment, making this expectation incompatible for women who are raising a family (Clarke, 2011).

The average for the "High" respondent group was 2.72 for this factor, meaning that even in organisations with higher gender diversity levels, long working hours equates to success. However, the t-test revealed that this factor was not significantly different between the "Low" and "High" group. This could mean that long working hours also affects men and not just women in senior management position, and therefore does not necessarily impact gender diversity levels.

6.1.5. "Travel"

Respondents in the "High" group rated extensive travel requirements for senior leadership positions as *less* prevalent in their organisations. Organisations tend to support men to undertake careers that are more "demanding" as expatriation arrangements for global positions often assume a "trailing spouse" who can easily move, whereas this arrangement is more unlikely to work for senior women (Ely et al., 2011).

With an average rating of 2.44, the "High" respondent group affirms that when there is less extensive travel for leadership positions, the perception that leadership roles are more suited for males is not as strong. This indicates that leadership positions could be suited for women and therefore raises the gender diversity levels.

6.1.6. "Flexible Time Arrangements"

On average, respondents working in organisations with higher gender diversity levels rated the factor "flexible time arrangements are not suitable for leadership positions" as *less* prevalent in their organisations. The use of flexible time arrangements, specifically those offered to parents of young children, is seen as a barrier to advancement, as it is not seen as compatible with a top-level career (McKinsey, 2013a).

The average for the "High" respondent group was 2.44, as shown in table 21. This result affirms that when flexible working arrangements are tailored appropriately and

are applied across all levels of the organisation, women could be more encouraged to reach senior management levels in the organisation, therefore leading to an increase in levels of gender diversity. However, the t-test revealed that this factor was not significantly different between the "Low" and "High" group. This could mean that poorly tailored flexible time arrangements also affect men and not just women in senior management positions, and therefore does not necessarily impact gender diversity levels.

6.1.7. "Leadership Commitment"

Respondents in the "High" group rated "leadership commitment and support regarding gender diversity is lacking" as *less* prevalent in their organisations. It is implied that leaders in these organisations are committed to, and support increasing gender diversity levels. When leadership supports diversity, more value is obtained, as it is not simply an initiative driven by certain women or the human resource department (Virick & Greer, 2012).

The degree to which organisational leadership believes in the strategic importance of employees is necessary for the approval and implementation of diversity practices (Herdman & Mcmillan-Capehart, 2010). The average for the "High" respondent group was 1.86, which indicates that leadership commitment and support is a promoting factor for increased gender diversity levels.

6.1.8. "Women Leaders Support Diversity"

On average, respondents working in organisations with higher gender diversity levels rated the factor "gender diversity issues are driven by women leaders only" as *less* prevalent in their organisations. It is implied that in these organisations, gender diversity issues are driven by both men and women leaders. In certain cases, it has been noted that often only women would drive to have women's issues addressed (Cooper, 2012).

The average for the "High" respondent group was 1.97, which aligns with literature. When both men and women drive gender diversity issues, it indicates that the organisation is earnest about improving gender diversity and that there could be an increase in gender diversity levels. However, the t-test revealed that this factor was not significantly different between the "Low" and "High" group. This could mean that whether only women or both genders support diversity does not necessarily impact gender diversity levels.

6.1.9. "Actual Gender Diversity"

Respondents in the "High" group rated "actual gender diversity levels in the company's senior leadership are very low" as *less* prevalent in their organisations. The diversity levels of management teams operate as a salient and visible signal of the organisation's and leadership support for diversity (Herdman & Mcmillan-Capehart, 2010).

"Low levels of gender diversity validate entrenched beliefs that support men's bids for leadership, which in turn, maintains the status quo" (Ely et al., 2011, p.475). The average for the "High" respondent group was 2.19, which indicates that when actual gender diversity levels are high, this is a promoting factor for increased gender diversity levels.

6.1.10. "Recruitment"

On average, respondents working in organisations with higher gender diversity levels rated the factor "recruiting managers tend to choose people who are similar to the leaders they are replacing" as *less* prevalent in their organisations. This result shows that when leadership goes against the tendency to recruit and promote people in their own image, a more favourable gender diversity climate is indicated (Sandler, 2014). This then defies the culture of depicting leadership as having certain characteristics which only men can truly display.

The average for the "High" respondent group was 2.39, which aligns with literature. When recruiting managers defer from choosing people who are similar to the leaders they are replacing, the culture of depicting leadership as certain male characteristics is further reduced.

6.1.11. "Placement"

On average, the "High" group rated "women managers generally occupy support roles" as *more* prevalent in their organisations. The placement of women in certain positions can signal the limited opportunities women have to advance their careers, and more women rise to senior roles in support or specialist functions rather than to general management positions (Sandler, 2014).

The average for the "High" respondent group was 2.72 for this factor, meaning that even in organisations with higher gender diversity levels, women leaders are more

likely to occupy support roles rather than profit-and-loss positions. Therefore, placing women in other roles is not necessarily a promoting factor for increased gender diversity levels in senior management positions.

6.1.12. "Performance Metrics"

Respondents working in organisations with higher gender diversity levels stated that "poor articulation of critical factors required to qualify someone for senior management positions" is *less* prevalent. This aligns with literature, which states that women are less likely to be overlooked for promotion when there are more explicit performance metrics (Virick & Greer, 2012).

The average for the "High" respondent group was 2.50, which is on the borderline to indicate whether this is a promoting factor for increased gender diversity levels. The t-test revealed that this factor was also not significantly different between the "Low" and "High" group. This means that gender diversity levels are not necessarily affected whether performance metrics are properly defined or not.

6.1.13. "Decision-Making Power"

On average, respondents working in organisations with higher gender diversity levels rated the factor "women have limited decision making power and the ability to influence decisions at the top of the organisation" as *less* prevalent in their organisations. Literature notes that in some cases, women report feeling "left out of the loop" due to the limited opportunity available for them to exercise power and decision making (Cooper, 2012).

The average for the "High" respondent group was 1.86, which aligns with literature in that when women will not feel "left out of the loop" in terms of decision-making power. When women managers are given more decision-making power, this is a strong promoting factor for increased gender diversity levels in the organisation.

6.1.14. "Social Gatherings"

Respondents in the "High" group rated "social gatherings are composed mostly of men, happen after hours, centred on masculine activities" as *less* prevalent in their organisations. Usually a barrier for women in such settings is that networks are composed mostly of men and when men centre their networks on masculine activities, it is even more difficult to break into those networks (Eagly & Carli, 2007).

The average for the "High" respondent group was 1.97, which indicates that when social gatherings include and are conducive for both genders, increased gender diversity levels are promoted.

6.2. Research question two

Research question two aimed to understand the organisational culture factors *inhibiting* increased gender diversity levels in South African organisations. The survey questions asked the respondent to rate the prevalence of the organisational culture factors within their organisation and to select the level of gender diversity. To determine the inhibiting factors, those responses with a gender diversity level of 0%-15% were grouped. The ratings for factors were averaged, and any factor with an average rating of *more than* 2.5 was considered an inhibiting factor. The results are discussed per factor with reference made to table 22.

6.2.1. "Leadership Beliefs"

On average, respondents working in organisations with lower gender diversity levels stated that the underlying belief that men make better leaders is *more* prevalent in their organisations. Eagly and Carli (2007) noted that some studies affirmed that women and men are linked with different traits, and relate men with more of the traits that connote leadership. This assumption derives from the perception that a leader needs to have certain characteristics that are often exhibited by men.

Gender stereotypes tend to be deeply embedded in society and follow women and men into the workplace (Hofmeyr & Mzobe, 2012). The average for the "Low" respondent group was 2.64, as shown in table 22. This result affirms that when the belief or assumption regarding leadership traits are favoured towards men, women could be discouraged to reach senior management levels in the organisation, therefore inhibiting increased levels of gender diversity.

6.2.2. "Leadership Styles"

Respondents working in organisations with lower gender diversity levels stated that the dominant leadership styles display *more* stereotypical traits of masculinity in their organisations. Male leadership has typically been referred to as being more authoritarian, having less emotion, and being able to see the bigger picture (Gallant, 2014). Women are perceived as being better listeners, having more empathy and

higher orientation to collaborative working while their male counterparts are more ambitious and aggressive (Sandler, 2014).

The average for the "Low" respondent group was 3.06, indicating that this is an inhibiting factor for increased gender diversity levels. Women leaders sometimes surrender the leadership role to men even when they demonstrate the leadership behaviour that is superior, because women themselves believe that being masculine displays more leadership characteristics (Toh & Leonardelli, 2012). The rating supports the literature that women leaders are discouraged in pursuing senior leadership positions when the dominant leadership styles display traits that are more masculine.

6.2.3. "Double Bind"

Respondents in the "Low" group rated the double bind effect as *more* prevalent in their organisations. The notion that women managers who display "masculine" leadership traits are labelled as "too aggressive" while those who display "feminine" leadership traits are labelled as "too soft" is somewhat displayed in these organisations.

Women who are seen as "too tough" are labelled "aggressive", while their female colleagues are viewed as "too soft", which results in a damned-if-she-does and damned-if-she-doesn't double bind (Beeson & Valerio, 2012). This creates the impression that women leaders are perceived as "never just right" (Evans, 2011).

The average for the Low respondent group was 2.55, which affirms that when these perceptions are prevalent in the organisation, women leaders are placed in a double bind, and essentially are judged differently from their male counterparts. However, the t-test revealed that this factor was not significantly different between the "Low" and "High" group. This indicates that the double bind is not a factor in promoting or inhibiting increased gender diversity levels.

6.2.4. "Working Hours"

On average, the "Low" group rated "long working hours equates to success" as *more* prevalent in their organisations. Success is still associated with long hours and a heavy commitment, making this expectation incompatible for women who are raising a family (Clarke, 2011).

The average for the "Low" respondent group was 3.03 for this factor, meaning that in organisations with lower gender diversity levels, long working hours equates to success. This perception indicates that the factor is inhibiting increased gender diversity levels in senior management positions. However, the t-test revealed that this factor was not significantly different between the "Low" and "High" groups. This could mean that long working hours also affect men and not just women in senior management positions, and therefore does not necessarily impact gender diversity levels.

6.2.5. "Travel"

Respondents in the "Low" group rated "extensive travel requirement for senior leadership positions" as *more* prevalent in their organisations. This aligns with literature, which states that organisations prefer that men undertake careers that are more demanding, as expatriation arrangements for global positions often assume a "trailing spouse" who can easily move, whereas this arrangement is more unlikely to work for senior women (Ely et al., 2011).

With an average rating of 2.91, the "Low" respondent group affirms that when travel that is more extensive is required for leadership positions, the perception that leadership roles are more suited for males is strong. This indicates that leadership positions might not be suited for women and therefore inhibits the gender diversity levels.

6.2.6. "Flexible Time Arrangements"

On average, respondents working in organisations with lower gender diversity levels rated the factor "flexible time arrangements are not suitable for leadership positions" as *more* prevalent in their organisations. The use of flexible time arrangements, specifically those offered to parents of young children is seen as a barrier to advancement and incompatible with a top-level career (McKinsey, 2013a).

The average for the "Low" respondent group was 2.88, as shown in table 22. This result affirms that when flexible working arrangements are not tailored appropriately and are not applied across all levels of the organisation, women could be discouraged to reach senior management levels in the organisation, therefore inhibiting gender diversity levels. However, the t-test revealed that this factor was not significantly different between the "Low" and "High" group. This could mean that poorly tailored flexible time arrangements also affect men and not just women in

senior management positions, and therefore do not necessarily impact gender diversity levels.

6.2.7. "Leadership Commitment"

Respondents in the "Low" group rated "leadership commitment and support regarding gender diversity is lacking" as *more* prevalent in their organisations. It is implied that leaders in these organisations are not committed to increasing gender diversity levels. On the contrary, Virick and Greer (2012) note that when diversity is supported by leadership more value is obtained, as it is not simply an initiative driven by certain women or the human resource department.

The degree to which organisational leadership believes in the strategic importance of employees is necessary for the approval and implementation of diversity practices (Herdman & Mcmillan-Capehart, 2010). The average for the "Low" respondent group was 2.70, which indicates that when leadership commitment and support is lacking, gender diversity levels are inhibited.

6.2.8. "Women Leaders Support Diversity"

On average, respondents working in organisations with lower gender diversity levels rated the factor "gender diversity issues are driven by women leaders only" as *less* prevalent in their organisations. It is implied that in these organisations, gender diversity issues are driven by both men and women leaders. In certain cases, it was noted that often only women would drive to have women's issues addressed (Cooper, 2012).

The average for the "Low" respondent group was 2.33, meaning that even in organisations with lower gender diversity levels, gender diversity issues are driven by both men and women. This indicates that this is not necessarily an inhibiting factor for increased gender diversity levels. However, the t-test revealed that this factor was not significantly different between the "Low" and "High" group. This could mean that whether only women or both genders support diversity does not necessarily impact gender diversity levels.

6.2.9. "Actual Gender Diversity"

Respondents in the "Low" group rated "actual gender diversity levels in the company's senior leadership are very low" as *more* prevalent in their organisations.

The diversity levels of management teams operate as a salient and visible signal of the organisation's and leadership support for diversity (Herdman & Mcmillan-Capehart, 2010).

This finding aligns with literature which states that "low levels of gender diversity validate entrenched beliefs that support men's bids for leadership, which in turn, maintains the status quo" (Ely et al., 2011, p.475). The average for the "Low" respondent group was 3.39, which indicates that when actual gender diversity levels are low, this is an inhibiting factor for increased gender diversity levels.

6.2.10. "Recruitment"

On average, respondents working in organisations with lower gender diversity levels rated the factor "recruiting managers tend to choose people who are similar to the leaders they are replacing" as *more* prevalent in their organisations. There is a tendency for people in leadership to recruit and promote people in their own image (Sandler, 2014). This then perpetuates the culture of depicting leadership as having certain characteristics that only men can truly display.

The average for the "Low" respondent group was 2.85, which aligns with literature. When recruiting managers choose people who are similar to the leaders they are replacing, the culture of depicting leadership as certain characteristics that can only be displayed by men is perpetuated. Increased gender diversity levels are therefore inhibited.

6.2.11. "Placement"

On average, the "Low" group rated "women managers generally occupy support roles" as *more* prevalent in their organisations. The placement of women in certain positions can signal the limited opportunities women have to advance their careers, and more women rise to senior roles in support or specialist functions rather than to general management positions (Sandler, 2014).

The average for the "Low" respondent group was 3.33 for this factor, meaning that in organisations with lower gender diversity levels, women leaders are more likely to occupy support roles rather than profit-and-loss positions. Therefore, placing women in support roles is an inhibiting factor for increased gender diversity levels in senior management positions.

6.2.12. "Performance Metrics"

Respondents working in organisations with lower gender diversity levels stated that "poor articulation of critical factors required to qualify someone for senior management positions" is *more* prevalent. Women are less likely to be overlooked for promotion when there are more explicit performance metrics (Virick & Greer, 2012).

The average for the "Low" respondent group was 2.73, which indicates that this is an inhibiting factor for increased gender diversity levels. This supports the literature that whether defined performance metrics are established can indicate the level of fairness in promoting women to senior leadership. However, the t-test revealed that this factor was not significantly different between the "Low" and "High" group. This means that whether performance metrics are properly defined or not does not necessarily impact gender diversity levels.

6.2.13. "Decision-Making Power"

On average, respondents working in organisations with lower gender diversity levels rated the factor "women have limited decision making power and the ability to influence decisions at the top of the organisation" as *less* prevalent in their organisations. Literature states that in some cases women report feeling "left out of the loop" due to the limited opportunity available for them to exercise power and decision making (Cooper, 2012).

The average for the "Low" respondent group was 2.45, which does not align with literature. This indicates that even if women are given more decision-making power, this does not necessarily support increased gender diversity levels.

6.2.14. "Social Gatherings"

Respondents in the "Low" group rated "social gatherings are composed mostly of men, happen after hours, centred on masculine activities" as *less* prevalent in their organisations. A barrier for women in such settings is that networks are composed mostly of men and when men centre their networks on masculine activities, it is even more difficult to break into those networks (Eagly & Carli, 2007). The average for the "Low" respondent group was 2.48, which indicates that this factor is not necessarily inhibiting increased gender diversity levels.

6.3. Research question three

Research question three aimed to understand the relative strength of each promoting and inhibiting factor respectively. A force-field analysis was employed to understand the relative strengths of factors by calculating the difference between the inhibitor and promoter score, divided by the sample size for the relevant group ("Low" or "High"). "Inhibitors" represents those who responded "somewhat and very prevalent" while "promoters" represents responses for "not and rarely prevalent". A summarised view of the strengths of each factor is provided in table 24 and is discussed further.

Table 24: Promoting and Inhibiting Factors

| Promoter | | Sig. | Inhibitor | |
|---------------------------------|------|------|---------------------------------|-----|
| Strength of factor | | | Strength of factor | |
| Leadership Commitment | 56% | Yes | Leadership Styles | 64% |
| Decision Making Power | 56% | Yes | Actual Gender Diversity | 64% |
| Leadership Beliefs | 33% | Yes | Placement | 58% |
| Social Gatherings | 28% | Yes | Recruitment | 45% |
| Actual Gender Diversity | 17% | Yes | Travel | 39% |
| Recruitment | 11% | Yes | Leadership Beliefs | 21% |
| Travel | 6% | Yes | Leadership Commitment | 21% |
| Leadership Styles | -11% | Yes | Decision Making Power | -3% |
| Placement | -11% | Yes | Social Gatherings | -3% |
| Women Leaders Support Diversity | 33% | No | Working Hours | 52% |
| Double Bind | 28% | No | Flexible Time Arrangements | 45% |
| Flexible Time Arrangements | -6% | No | Performance Metrics | 21% |
| Performance Metrics | -11% | No | Double Bind | 15% |
| Working Hours | -22% | No | Women Leaders Support Diversity | -9% |

The strongest promoters for increased gender diversity levels are "Leadership Commitment" and "Decision Making Power", with 56% more respondents who rated these as not/rarely prevalent compared to rating it as somewhat/very prevalent. This indicates that when leaders firmly support gender diversity issues and when women are given decision-making power in organisations, an enabling environment is created for higher levels of gender diversity. "Leadership Beliefs" and "Social Gatherings" followed as strong promoting factors, while "Placement" and "Leadership Styles" were rated as weak promoters scoring a negative result.

The strongest inhibitors for increased gender diversity levels are "Leadership Styles", "Actual Gender Diversity", and "Placement". Fifty-eight to sixty-four percent more respondents rated these as somewhat/very prevalent compared to rating it as not/rarely

prevalent. Weak inhibiting factors were "Decision-Making Power" and "Social Gatherings".

To interpret the strengths of factors further, the factors were grouped in the categories of culture dimensions presented in the literature review. The four categories comprised cultural beliefs about gender, workplace structures, practices, and patterns of interaction (Ibarra et al., 2013). This is represented in table 25 with each factor colour coded by strength.

The strength indicator was deduced using the relative strengths shown in table 23. A value greater than 50% was reasoned as "Very strong", between 25%-50% was "Strong", between 0%-25% was "Average", and less than 0% was "Weak". By representing the factors in this manner, it can allow organisations to understand where leadership should focus in terms of what factors to improve on (promoters) and what factors to address (inhibitors).

Table 25: Promoting and inhibiting factors per culture dimension

| Category | Factor | Promoter | Inhibitor |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Beliefs about gender / leaders | 1. Leadership Beliefs | Strong | Average |
| | 2. Leadership Styles | Weak | Very Strong |
| | 3. Double bind | Insignificant difference | |
| Workplace structures | 4. Working Hours | Insignificant difference | |
| | 5. Travel | Average | Strong |
| | 6. Flexible Time Arrangements | Insignificant difference | |
| Practices | 7. Leadership Commitment | Very Strong | Average |
| | 8. Women Leaders Support Diversity | Insignificant | |
| | 9. Actual Gender Diversity | Average | Very Strong |
| | 10. Recruitment | Average | Strong |
| | 11. Placement | Weak | Very Strong |
| | 12. Performance metrics | Insignificant difference | |
| Patterns of interaction | 13. Decision making power | Very Strong | Weak |
| | 14. Social Gatherings | Strong | Weak |

Across the four categories as a whole, "Patterns of interaction" represents strong promoting factors while "Practices" represents strong inhibiting factors. It is also evident that there is a clear contrast in factors that promote and factors that inhibit increased gender diversity levels. Not one factor represents a dominant strength as both a promoter and an inhibitor. This indicates that in organisations with higher gender diversity levels, the factors that are perceived as promoters for increased gender

diversity levels are not the same factors perceived as inhibitors in organisations with lower gender diversity levels.

Perceptions in an organisation are based on both formal and informal features of the organisation, including policies, practices, and organisational routines (Herdman & Mcmillan-Capehart, 2010). The results for inhibitors shows strengths predominantly in these policies and practices which are tangible elements that can be addressed practically through changing recruitment and placement policies for women, and more actively placing women in senior leadership positions through affirmative action policies. In addition, the strong result for prevailing leadership styles could also be linked to the tangible element of who is currently in leadership roles and how this is perceived by members in the organisation.

With regard to perceptions, Ibarra et al. (2013) went further to suggest that "second-generation" forms of gender bias are the primary cause of women's persistent underrepresentation in leadership roles. The results for promoting factors shows that organisations with higher gender diversity levels focus on the more subtle and invisible elements that create barriers for women. These include addressing the underlying belief that men make better leaders by forming strong leadership commitment and support for improving gender diversity, ensuring women are in positions of true power, and enabling social and important network opportunities for both genders.

Although there appears to be contrasting strengths of factors, there are five factors with very strong to average strengths for both promoters and inhibitors. These include "Leadership Beliefs", "Leadership Commitment", "Travel", "Actual Gender Diversity" and "Recruitment". The first two factors were rated strong factors as promoters, while the remaining three were strong inhibitors. This highlights the contrast between more subtle and tangible elements referred to in the previous two paragraphs. This can be interpreted that it is a necessary condition for organisations to ensure strong leadership commitment to increasing gender diversity and addressing the underlying beliefs regarding leadership before tangible elements are effected.

If organisations with lower levels of gender diversity only focus on the tangible factors, this might not enable these organisations to reach high levels of gender diversity. Without visible commitment from leadership, organisations will lose talented women managers – organisations also need to implement practices that remove gender bias in succession planning and career development (Beeson & Valerio, 2012). It might be

beneficial for these organisations to simultaneously consider focusing on the more subtle elements of organisational culture such as underlying beliefs and leadership commitment to gender diversity. As shown in organisations with higher gender diversity levels, promoters that are focused on these elements create an enabling environment for the promotion of gender diversity.

6.4. Summary

In this chapter, the statistical results presented in chapter five were discussed in more detail, linking the problem statement in chapter one and findings of the literature review in chapter two. Of the 14 factors uncovered in the literature review, nine factors were significantly different between the two groups: "Low" and "High" gender diversity levels. From the nine significant factors, eight were less prevalent in the "High" group indicating an enabling organisational culture for increased gender diversity levels, while seven were more prevalent in the "Low" group indicating a less conducive environment for increased gender diversity levels. Finally, the force-field analysis revealed the different strengths of each factor, as well as contrasting strengths for promoters and inhibitors.

7. Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter is to consolidate the major findings of organisational culture and factors influencing gender diversity levels are discussed. Thereafter, recommendations to organisational stakeholders are provided and ideas for future research are proposed.

7.1. Findings

The overarching aim of this research was to identify the key organisational culture factors that are influencing gender diversity levels in companies, particularly in senior and top management levels. The research questions aimed to understand the organisational culture factors promoting and inhibiting increased gender diversity levels, and determine the relative strength of each factor. The following findings emerged from the literature review and statistical analysis of this research study.

Firstly, the literature review uncovered 14 organisational culture factors impacting gender diversity in companies. Comparing the factors across two groups, nine factors were significantly different between the two groups. In organisations with "High" gender diversity levels, eight were less prevalent, indicating that these factors contribute to an enabling organisational culture for increased gender diversity levels. In organisations with "Low" gender diversity levels, seven were more prevalent indicating a less conducive environment for increased gender diversity levels.

Secondly, the force-field analysis revealed the different strengths of each factor, as well as the contrasting strengths for promoters and inhibitors. Across the four categories of the culture framework, "Patterns of interaction" represented strong promoting factors while "Practices" represented strong inhibiting factors. The strongest promoters for increased gender diversity levels were "Leadership Commitment" and "Decision Making Power". The strongest inhibitors for increased gender diversity levels were "Leadership Styles", "Actual Gender Diversity", and "Placement".

Thirdly, there is a clear contrast in factors that promote and factors that inhibit increased gender diversity levels. Not one factor represented a dominant strength as both a promoter and an inhibitor. This indicates that in organisations with higher gender diversity levels, the factors that are perceived as promoters for increased gender diversity levels are not the same factors perceived as inhibitors in organisations with lower gender diversity levels.

Finally, five factors were identified as strong to average across promoters and inhibitors. Two factors were strong promoters and represented more subtle elements while the remaining three factors were strong inhibitors representing more practical elements. It is important for organisations to ensure there is strong leadership commitment to increasing gender diversity and addressing the underlying leadership beliefs while also focusing on improving tangible elements such as recruitment policies and actual gender diversity levels.

7.2. Recommendations

In order to further increase gender diversity levels, it would be beneficial for organisations with higher gender diversity levels to continue focusing on the more subtle and invisible elements that create barriers for women. These include addressing the underlying belief that men make better leaders by forming strong leadership commitment and support for improving gender diversity, ensuring that women are in positions of true power, and enabling social and important network opportunities for both genders.

It will be necessary for organisations like these to continue to address attitudes toward the advancement of women by challenging the assumptions of leadership traits. This can be practically done by hiring leaders that do not typically represent “masculine” characteristics and also by placing women in positions other than support functions. Addressing mind-sets can assist leaders in changing the organisation’s leadership landscape and management pipeline, and ultimately increase the proportion of women in top management positions.

For organisations with low levels of gender diversity, it will be beneficial to focus on improving the tangible elements of policies and practices that are evident to employees. These include changing recruitment and placement policies for women, more actively placing women in senior leadership positions through affirmative action policies, and carefully considering the leadership styles of those in senior management positions when recruiting for these positions.

Leaders should add the goal of increased gender diversity to the strategic agenda of the organisation and not just view it as an add-on diversity program. This commitment should be evident and should be as important as a key operational challenge. Including this on the strategic agenda will support the integration of gender diversity into other

aspects, such as HR policies and the conscious placement of women in positions other than support functions.

However, purely focusing on these tangible elements might not achieve desirably high levels of gender diversity. As shown in organisations with higher gender diversity levels, promoters that are focused on more subtle elements create an enabling environment for the promotion of gender diversity. Beeson and Valerio (2012) recommend that organisations need to implement practices that remove gender bias in succession planning and career development, as well as ensure that stereotypes do not obstruct the goal of improving gender diversity. Therefore, to ensure continued improvements in gender diversity levels, organisations must focus on the invisible components of organisational culture.

7.3. Future research

The following research is suggested:

- The descriptive statistics showed a contrast in the perception of the organisational culture factors between genders. The female group perceived factors to be more prevalent, while males perceived them as less prevalent. This could warrant further investigation as to what is influencing the difference in perception.
- The sample was not large enough to compare perceptions between groups according to management level. It might be relevant to understand whether organisational culture factors will be perceived differently across management levels.
- Key organisational culture factors need further analysis to determine how to counteract the factors that this research report result has identified as being inhibiting to gender diversity.
- Within certain industries, organisational culture could be less conducive for increased gender diversity. Future research should replicate this study, but differentiate between industries.

7.4. Conclusion

Even with substantial evidence showing a positive correlation between gender diversity and business performance, women are still underrepresented at senior management, executive management and board levels. The proposed new Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Bill in South Africa require organisations to fill a minimum of 50%

of all top and senior management positions with women (Republic of South Africa, 2013). The growth trend in the proportion of females in top management positions has been slow and has only grown to 20% in 2012 (Department of Labour Republic of South Africa, 2013). With its stalled growth of proportions in top management levels, South African organisations still have a long way to go to achieve the requirements of the bill.

This research study sought to understand the key organisational culture factors influencing gender diversity levels in companies, and determined that different factors promote increased gender diversity in organisations with higher gender diversity levels compared to factors inhibiting increased gender diversity in organisations with low gender diversity levels. The research brought insight into which organisational culture factors can be used as enablers to create an organisational culture that is conducive for increasing gender diversity.

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Appendix 1: Questionnaire

The objective of this research is to understand the organisational culture factors that are impacting gender diversity levels and women in companies. Organisational culture can be explained as the deeply seated values and beliefs shared by members of an organisation, which forms the bases of communication and mutual understanding, is preserved through the assumptions that are maintained through human interaction, and manifest in attitudes and behaviour.

In order to achieve the research objective, please complete this questionnaire, which should take no more than 15 minutes of your time. All data will be kept confidential and by completing the survey, you indicate that you voluntarily participate in this research. If you have any concerns, please contact me using the following details:

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0825367809

Section 1: Personal information

| | | |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------|--|
| 1. | Gender | |
| 2. | Age | |
| 3. | Race | |
| 4. | Current industry | |
| 5. | Name of company | |
| 6. | Number of years in company | |
| 7. | Management level | |
| 8. | Number of years in management | |
| 9. | Marital status (married / unmarried / life partner) | |
| 10. | Number of children | |
| 11. | Age of children | |

Section 2: Organisational culture factors in company

Question 2.1

Please indicate the gender diversity level within your company by selecting the appropriate bracket (this is the percentage of women in top management positions of total top management positions):

| Gender diversity level | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 0%–15% | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 16%–30% | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 31%–50% | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| >50% | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Question 2.2

Please indicate how prevalent each factor is in the company by ticking the relevant number:

1 = not prevalent; 2 = rarely prevalent; 3 = somewhat prevalent; 4 = very prevalent

| | Factor | Degree of prevalence | | | |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|---|---|
| 1. | There is an underlying belief that men make better leaders | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. | The dominant leadership styles display stereotypical traits of masculinity (i.e. authority, ambitious, tough, arrogance, etc.) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. | Women managers who display "masculine" leadership traits are labelled as "too aggressive" while those who display "feminine" leadership traits are labelled as "too soft" | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. | Long working hours equates to success | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. | Senior leadership positions require extensive travel | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. | Flexible time arrangements are not suitable for leadership positions in the company (for example, it is not feasible to work half-day, as leaders are expected to be continually present) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

| | | | | | |
|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| 7. | Leadership commitment and support regarding gender diversity is lacking | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 8. | Gender diversity issues are driven by women leaders only | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 9. | The actual gender diversity levels in the company's senior leadership is very low | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 10. | Recruiting managers tend to choose people who are similar to the leaders they are replacing | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 11. | Women managers generally occupy support roles (for example, human resources, finance and other internal-facing roles) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 12. | There is poor articulation of critical factors required to qualify someone for senior management positions | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 13. | It is perceived that women have limited decision making power and the ability to influence decisions at the top of the organisation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 14. | Social gatherings are composed mostly of men, happen after hours, centred on "masculine" activities | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

Question 2.3

Please list any other organisational culture factors that you have observed in your career that have been omitted from the list above. Please also rate the degree of prevalence:

| | Factor | | Degree of prevalence | | |
|-----|--------|--|----------------------|---|---|
| 15. | | | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 16. | | | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 17. | | | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 18. | | | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 19. | | | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 20. | | | 2 | 3 | 4 |

Appendix 2: Questionnaire Results

| Factor | Not prevalent | Rarely prevalent | Somewhat prevalent | Very prevalent |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| There is an underlying belief that men make better leaders | 29% | 25% | 35% | 12% |
| The dominant leadership styles display stereotypical traits of masculinity (i.e. authority, ambitious, tough, arrogance, etc.) | 16% | 16% | 43% | 25% |
| Women managers who display "masculine" leadership traits are labelled as "too aggressive" while those who display "feminine" leadership traits are labelled as "too soft" | 25% | 29% | 32% | 14% |
| Long working hours equates to success | 14% | 17% | 35% | 33% |
| Senior leadership positions require extensive travel | 13% | 29% | 36% | 22% |
| Flexible-time arrangements are not suitable for leadership positions in the company (for example, it is not feasible to work half-day, as leaders are expected to be continually present) | 22% | 16% | 38% | 25% |
| Leadership commitment and support regarding gender diversity is lacking | 28% | 32% | 28% | 13% |
| Gender diversity issues are driven by women leaders only | 36% | 25% | 28% | 12% |
| The actual gender diversity levels in the company's senior leadership is very low | 17% | 22% | 28% | 33% |
| Recruiting managers tend to choose people who are similar to the leaders they are replacing | 13% | 29% | 42% | 16% |
| Women managers generally occupy support roles (for example, human resources, finance and other internal-facing roles) | 12% | 22% | 29% | 38% |
| There is poor articulation of critical factors required to qualify someone for senior management positions | 20% | 22% | 35% | 23% |
| It is perceived that women have limited decision making power and the ability to influence decisions at the top of the organisation | 30% | 35% | 25% | 10% |
| Social gatherings are composed mostly of men, happen after hours, centred on "masculine" activities | 33% | 25% | 29% | 13% |