

**Coping strategies applied by black leaders to overcome racial barriers in
corporate South Africa**

Matthew Mflathelwa

19384999

An article 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.

1 December 2020

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.

Matthew Mziwoxolo Mflathelwa

Signature: _____

Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| 1. Cover letter | 4 |
| 2. Chapter 2: Literature review | 5 |
| 2.1 Low representation fuels discriminatory environments | 7 |
| 2.2 Evolution of racism | 8 |
| 2.3 Aversive racism and microaggression | 8 |
| 2.4 Intersectionality theory | 9 |
| 2.5 Coping and the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping (TMSC)..... | 10 |
| 2.6 Coping and self-efficacy | 11 |
| 2.7 Coping and modern racism (microaggression and incivility) | 13 |
| 2.8 The Influence of Gender on coping strategy | 14 |
| 3. Chapter 4: Research Methodology | 16 |
| 3.1 Proposed Methodology..... | 16 |
| 3.2 Population..... | 19 |
| 3.3 Unit of analysis | 19 |
| 3.4 Sampling method and size | 19 |
| 3.5 Measurement instrument | 21 |
| 3.6 Data gathering process..... | 22 |
| 3.7 Analysis approach | 24 |
| 3.8 Quality controls..... | 25 |
| 3.9 Limitations | 27 |
| 4. Reference List | 29 |
| 5. Appendices | 36 |
| 5.1 Appendix 1: Analysis of various coping strategies used in literature | 37 |
| 5.2 Appendix 2: Author guidelines of the journal..... | 38 |
| 5.3 Appendix 3: Example of an article from the journal..... | 44 |
| 5.4 Appendix 4: Interview schedule | 46 |
| 5.5 Appendix 5: Plagiarism declaration form..... | 47 |
| 5.6 Appendix 6: Copyright declaration | 49 |
| 5.7 Appendix 7: Certification of Data Analysis Support form..... | 50 |
| 5.8 Appendix 8: Ethical clearance letter..... | 52 |

1. Cover letter

Editor in Chief
Emerald Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
[Address]
1 December 2020

To whom it may concern

We are pleased to contribute to the call made by the Equality, Diversity & Equality journal, for your special issue: Intersectionality in Progressive Research: Contesting Privilege, Fostering Inclusion.

The paper seeks to shed light on the coping strategies applied by black senior and top management in light of their underrepresentation in executive roles. We believe that the attached manuscript is well suited to complement the content in your journal, given that it provides a unique perspective on coping strategies to overcome racial barriers (microaggressions) while considering intersectionality theory in the South African context. This is one of very few papers that have explored the coping strategies of both male and female professionals in South Africa's unique racial context and would be a great compliment to some of your publications, e.g. Nair, Good, & Murrell's, (2019) *Microaggression experiences of different marginalised identities*.

We hope you will consider it in your special issue as we believe it contributes to our understanding of the racial dynamics in the workplace.

Looking forward to your positive feedback

Yours sincerely

Matthew Mflathelwa – MBA Candidate
University of Pretoria's Gordon Institute of Business Science
19384999@mygibs.co.za

2. Chapter 2: Literature review

The purpose of this research study was to understand the coping strategies applied by black senior and top managers in South Africa's private sector to overcome racial barriers. Several studies have been conducted to identify and understand the barriers to transformation with an intention to improve employment equity progress. These studies have explored the barriers from a legislative, organisational and even at a personal level. Booysen (2007) in her study into the barriers of employment equity and retention of black management, validated findings by other researchers that the lack of commitment by organisations, white male-dominated cultures, unfair discrimination and exclusionary practices continue to undermine employment equity objectives and the retention of black management (Booyesen, 2007). Page (2015) investigated the factors to improve the effectiveness of the employment equity strategies in South African organisations in which the author highlighted, the alignment of the strategy, appropriate procedures and policies and a key enabler to transformation. Furthermore, leadership commitment to implement the strategy made a marked difference in the organisations analysed (Page, 2015). More recently, Leteane, (2018), Weeto (2019) and Shongwe (2019) have all explored the barriers to transformation using different theoretical lenses in order to improve women representation in senior leadership. Leteane (2018) explored the experiences of black female managers in South Africa's banking sector to understand the factors required to improve inclusion and therefore improve the representation of black women in senior leadership. Some of the key barriers included the lack of mentors, absence of climates that promote inclusion, expectations of conformity for black female employees. Furthermore, it was found that a sense of belonging at a personal level, access to information, involvement in important decisions at an organisational level are key drivers to inclusion. Tokenism and critical mass (minority status) and stereotyping were some of the barriers that were considered to inhibit inclusion. Similarly, Pillay (2019) conducted an exploratory study to understand the barriers women face at a personal level and the traits required to reach top management level. The barriers highlighted by women in this study included stereotyping, the glass ceiling phenomenon and social identity conflicts like the "old boys club" (Pillay, 2019). The research also concluded that self-efficacy and belonging (social identity) had a positive impact on women's career

prospects (Pillay, 2019). Shongwe, (2019) conducted research to understand the barriers that contribute to the underrepresentation of women in companies listed in the Johannesburg Stock Exchange. Similar to all the other research conducted in this field, the glass ceiling, stereotyping and the old boys club seemed to feature in the environments of these women. The result of these studies show that despite the different contexts, there are clear similarities in the stories of black women in these organisations, with common themes centred around; stereotyping, glass ceilings, lack of inclusion, and Tokenism (Leteane, 2018; Weeto, 2019; Shongwe, 2019).

Whilst a significant amount of research has been done around the effects of discrimination on black people in management positions, little has been done to understand the experiences of black and minority ethnic (BME) leaders' journeys and how these executives thrive and succeed despite the obstacles in the workplace (Wyatt & Silvester, 2015). Most of the research either relates to women or relates to lower-level employees, and there is insufficient research on the racial barriers facing employees in senior leadership positions. Using the metaphor of the labyrinth, Wyatt & Silvester (2015) propose that managers who have navigated and succeeded on their journey to the top are well placed to provide advice on the challenges, opportunities and the interpretation of the barriers. Locally authors like Khuzwayo (2018) and Pillay (2019) share a similar sentiment by recommending that a broader understanding of this phenomenon and its dynamics warrants further research into the topic to explore, compare and contrast the strategies employed by black professionals (Khuzwayo, 2018; Pillay, 2019).

Not enough is known about black professionals (Pitcan, Park-Taylor, & Hayslett, 2018), specifically those in senior and top management positions. Furthermore, despite the acknowledgement that race plays a critical role in the experiences of black people in the organisational context, and the dismal performance in terms of black representation in senior and top management in corporate (Holder, Jackson, & Ponterotto, 2015), research into aversive forms of racism and their manifestations in the South African context is (Boswell, 2014).

Given the persistent under-representation of black executives in corporate South Africa (Republic of South Africa, 1998; Weeto, 2019; Leteane, 2018) and the lack of genuine commitment by organisations (Booyesen, 2007) black leaders have to develop coping strategies to survive. Therefore, theory on modern racial discrimination, coping strategies and self-efficacy will be discussed to distinguish to explore how Black leaders (that are seen as a minority) in corporate South Africa succeed despite persistent challenges they face in the workplace (Tomlinson, Muzio, Sommerlad, Webley, & Duff, 2013; Wyatt & Silvester, 2015).

2.1 Low representation fuels discriminatory environments

Wingfield & Cahvez (2020) show how structural, organisational and individual disadvantages black people collectively experience contribute to the low representation of black people in professional jobs. When they ascend to senior positions, they are a small minority and as a result frequently encounter racial discrimination and exclusionary practices (Wingfield & Cahvez, 2020; Cortina, Kabat-Farr, Leskinen, Huerta, & Mangle, 2013; Deitch, Barsky, Butz, Chan, Brief, & Bradley, 2003). Consequently, black professionals in predominantly white managed organisations face several challenges, including, fewer opportunities for advancement, being undermined by colleagues, clients and superiors (Wingfield & Cahvez, 2020). Chrobot-Mason and Aramovich (2013) showed that minority employees who feel marginalised have a tendency to disengage and are likely to leave the employer (Chrobot-Mason & Aramovich, 2013). A meta-analysis into workplace racial discrimination showed that companies with discriminatory environments find it difficult to attract and retain talented people, which directly impacts on the company's performance. Discriminatory work environments are associated with increased incidents of stress reduced job engagement (Deitch E. A. et al., 2003; McCord, Joseph, Dhanani, & Beus, 2018) and higher absenteeism (Triana, Jayasinghe, & Pieper, 2015). Employees who perceive racial discrimination also have a negative perception of the organisation's diversity culture, which in turn affects how employees perceive the levels of inclusion (Triana et al., 2015). Research into the impact of race on leadership perceptions (Festekjian, Tram, Murray, Sy, & Huynh, 2014) concluded that interpersonal and intrapersonal

leadership potential have an effect on leadership perception which directly influences the presence of minority groups in management ranks. Leadership perceptions were found to be lower for minority groups which in turn negatively impacted their interpersonal and intrapersonal leadership perceptions (Festekjian, Tram, Murray, Sy, & Huynh, 2014). Understanding why black and minority leaders are underrepresented in leadership positions requires an appreciation of the racial barriers and insight into the employment experiences of these leaders (Obenauera & Langer, 2019)

2.2 Evolution of racism

Given the strong focus of legislation and company policies to address discrimination, explicit forms of racism and racial discrimination have become less prominent while covert, ambiguous frequent forms of discrimination have become more pronounced (Noon, 2018; Wingfield & Cahvez, 2020) . Various concepts have been developed to explain the covert, frequent, small acts of racial discrimination by various authors, for example; everyday racism (Essed, 1991), aversive racism (Boswell, 2014; Dovidio & Gaertner, 2000), subtle discrimination (Rowe, 1990), selective incivility (Cortina, Kabat-Farr, Leskinen, Huerta, & Manglely, 2013) and micro-aggressions (Sue, et al., 2007). What these concepts have in common is the intent of the action is ambiguous; in isolation, the incidents can easily be considered insignificant and as a result; this form of discrimination is difficult to detect and manage (Deitch A. , et al., 2003; Noon, 2018).

2.3 Aversive racism and microaggression

Despite the similarities in these concepts, there are key distinctions, specifically between aversive racism and microaggression that need to be clarified. For example, the study of aversive racism, is primarily concerned with underlying psychological mechanism, whereas research on microaggressions is focused on the behavioural outcomes (Dovidio, Pearson, & Penner, 2018) of the racial biases.

Most relevant to the present study is microaggressions because it focuses on the manifestations of racial biases which, when applied as a theoretical framework can shed light on the experiences that minority black senior and top managers may be exposed to. While a multilevel approach to understanding racism is advantageous to obtain an integrated, holistic picture of the dynamics of racism and racial discrimination (Hennekam & Syed, 2018), the focus of this paper is on the micro-level experiences of senior and top managers in the context of the organisation which manifest as microaggressions in predominantly white teams (Sue et al., 2007; Holder, Jackson, & Ponterotto, 2015). Microaggressions manifest in several different ways, including exclusion, discrimination, labelling and invisibility (Sue et al., 2007; Pitcan, Park-Taylor, & Hayslett, 2018).

2.4 Intersectionality theory

One of the shortcomings in previous microaggression research is that most studies focus solely on one dimension of the individual's social identity (Nadal, Davidoff, Davis, & Wong, 2015). To overcome this, the concept of Intersectionality is introduced with microaggression theory to address this shortcoming by considering other dimensions of social identity (Tajfel, 1978) when analysing racial microaggressions. First conceptualised by Crenshaw (1989), Intersectionality theory is a framework used to understand the dynamics created by the intersection of different identities that vary in the degree of privilege and power (Cortina, Kabat-Farr, Leskinen, Huerta, & Mangle, 2013). In this study, intersectionality theory provides a useful framework to understand the difference in experiences between black male and female respondents. Intersectionality theory provides a useful framework to understand the experiences of black women given that both race and gender dimensions can be a disadvantage for women and therefore requires these dimensions to be considered in parallel.

The application of Intersectionality is not limited to understanding black women's experiences. It has been applied to understand the experiences of men, for example, the negative stereotypes of Latina men lower class citizens' association with criminality (Nadal, Davidoff, Davis, & Wong, 2015). Pitcan et al. (2018) applied the

concept of Intersectionality and microaggression to explain the experiences of black men in predominantly white organisations, while Cortina et al. (2013) applied the theory to understand the impact of selective incivility. These two key concepts will be used as the theoretical lens through which the experiences of black senior and top managers in South African corporations will be analysed.

2.5 Coping and the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping (TMSC)

There are various definitions of coping across the literature. In the social and behavioural science context, coping is defined as the thoughts and behaviours that an individual employs in response to external demands appraised as stressful, important and negative (Folkman & Moskowitz, 2004; Raskauskas & Huynh, 2015). First introduced in 1984, the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping was developed to understand why certain individuals manage better than others in stressful situations (Lazarus & Folkman, 1987; Folkman & Moskowitz, 2004). According to this concept, there are two types of coping strategies (problem-focused and emotion-focused) that may be employed by an individual depending on how they appraise the situation or incident (Lazarus & Folkman, 1987; Folkman & Moskowitz, 2004; Raskauskas & Huynh, 2015). The process follows a two-step appraisal process in which the individual establishes whether the situation is a challenge or a threat (primary appraisal) and secondly whether the individual has sufficient resources to cope with the situation (secondary appraisal). The outcome of this two-step appraisal process is what informs the type of coping strategy the individual is likely to adopt (Raskauskas & Huynh, 2015). Part of the consideration in the second appraisal aims to understand the amount of control the individual has on the situation and the potential of coping strategies.

The appraisal process is one of the key determinants to the coping strategy employed, which is influenced by the amount of psychological capacity (coping resources) that the individual believes they have at their disposal (Taylor & Stanton, 2007). Coping resources can be described in terms of internal and external resources. Internal resources refer to personality traits like optimism, perceived control and self-efficacy, while external resources consider support structures

(Rautenbach, 2019). Based on the appraisal process, the individual will either engage in a pro-active problem focussed strategy to resolve the problem or a reactive emotion-focused coping strategy to manage emotions in response to the appraised stress factor (Mühlhaus & Bouwmeester, 2016).

Problem-focused coping, which is usually employed when the individual appraises the situation as manageable and is then followed by taking action to resolve the source of the stress, whereas emotion-focused problem solving is usually when the individual does not believe that they have the capacity to solve the problem and resorts to an emotional response to the cause of stress (Folkman & Moskowitz, 2004; Mühlhaus & Bouwmeester, 2016). The idea of working in an environment that is not welcoming or biased against the employee can result in a stressful experience, and by means of appraisal, the individual then assesses the effect of this stress on their wellbeing.

Research into the coping strategies adopted by individuals in different context shows how people adopt different coping strategies according to how they appraise the experience and self-confidence influence by several factors. Men and women adopt different coping styles relative to each other (Cronqvist, Klang, & Björvell, 1997) while another study found that self-categorisation and social identity (inclusion) encouraged positive coping strategy amongst individuals in high-status groups (Mühlhaus & Bouwmeester, 2016).

2.6 Coping and self-efficacy

Self-efficacy is defined as the individual's belief that he or she is capable of performing a particular task (Lunenburg, 2011; Bandura, 1997). Self-efficacy influences learning and performance by the goals that employees set for themselves, the effort people exert on the job and the persistence people with which an individual will attempt a challenging task (Lunenburg, 2011). Perceived self-efficacy, the belief in one's abilities influences their actions and thoughts in various ways that affect how they respond to challenges (Bandura, 1997). Firstly, from a cognitive perspective, people with high self-efficacy are more likely to set more ambitious goals, commit to meeting challenges and focus on the desired outcome rather than the challenges.

Secondly, from a motivation perspective people with self-efficacy are motivated by the belief that they are likely to achieve what they set their minds to, which in turn influences the amount of effort, how long they persevere and how likely they are to overcome a setback. Thirdly, people with high self-efficacy are better able to manage their stress since they are able to act in ways to reduce the perceived threat and better control over their thoughts.

Bandura (1986) proposed that the individual's level of self-efficacy is a determinant of the coping strategy they are likely to adopt. Individuals with high self-efficacy are likely to engage in a problem-solving approach to stress. People engage in problem-solving coping strategies based on the appraisal they have made about the perceived threat or source of stress. People that appraise the stress as manageable are more likely to seek positive ways to solve the problem (Zhao, et al., 2015; Raskauskas & Huynh, 2015; Zhao, et al., 2015). Studies investigating the perceived stress, coping strategy and self-efficacy of individuals in different contexts showed that higher self-efficacy influenced the appraisal process of the individuals which in turn encouraged the samples to engage in positive coping strategies, i.e. problem-solving behaviour when encountered with stress (Zhao, et al., 2015; Raskauskas & Huynh, 2015). Similarly, a study looking at the personal characteristics and coping strategies on salesperson turnover showed that individuals with high efficacy adopted problem-solving coping strategies and in turn, reduced turnover intentions. This study showed the plausible link based to the fact that people with high self-efficacy are less likely to engage in emotion-based coping strategies due to the inherent confidence in their abilities (Lewin & Sager, 2010). Another indication of the link between self-efficacy to coping strategies was evidenced in the narrative study of female executives in South Africa. Being even less represented, black women in South Africa face more barriers than the black men - this study highlighted self-efficacy as one of the key ingredients to enable black women leaders to succeed despite the barriers facing them (Pillay, 2019)

2.7 Coping and modern racism (microaggression and incivility)

Research into the coping strategies applied by black people and other minorities in response to stress-related racial discrimination has been widely published. Lewis et al. (2013) applied the TMSC to study the coping strategies of 17 university students using intersectionality theory and identified five coping strategies which were grouped into three main categories, namely; resistance coping, collective coping strategies and protective coping strategies. Similarly, Spates et al. (2020) explored the coping strategies applied by African American women to cope with gendered racism and identified redefining black womanhood, covert and overt resistance, faith and prayer and making use of a support structure as the key themes to describe the types of coping strategies. Holder et al. (2015), looked at the coping strategies applied by women in corporate leadership to overcome microaggressions and found similar themes to Spates et al. (2020), with the addition of shifting, sponsorship and mentorship as additional themes. Pitcan et al. (2018) found that black men engaged in two types of coping strategies internally focused and externally focused coping. Internally focused coping strategies included strategies like the restriction of identity, John Henryism, humour and compartmentalisation, while externally focused strategies included avoidance and support from social networks (Pitcan, Park-Taylor, & Hayslett, 2018). DeCuir-Gunby et al. (2020) adopted the concept of adaptive and maladaptive coping strategies to describe how African American professionals in higher education institutions coped with microaggressions. In this research, adaptive strategies also defined as engagement coping strategies (e.g. confronting racism, forming personal networks, seeking mentorship and turning to religion/spirituality, where defined as positive ways of dealing with stress. Maladaptive coping strategies, also defined as disengagement coping strategies (e.g. denying that race-related issues exist, working harder to prove others wrong, suppression of feelings), were considered as unhealthy approaches that may increase stress. Contrary to the engagement coping strategies which seek to resolve the problem, the maladaptive coping strategy seeks to avoid the stress by either suppression of the emotions or detaching from the situation. The concept of adaptive and maladaptive strategies is strikingly similar to Lazarus & Folkman's (1987) transactional model of stress and coping.

2.8 The Influence of Gender on coping strategy

Various authors have indicated the difference in coping strategies between black men and women when dealing with stressful events (Greer & Cavalhieri, 2019; Baker & Berenbaum, 2007). According to Greer & Cavalhieri (2019), research has indicated that gender has an influence on the coping strategy adopted by the individual and that women tend to utilise emotion focus coping strategies while men tend to engage in problem-solving coping strategies. Men are less likely to seek social support and have a greater tendency to engage in efforts to prove themselves, e.g. John Henryism. These high effort behavioural responses have proven to be unsustainable and lead to negative health impact in the long term (Greer & Cavalhieri, 2019). Building on this point, Lewis, et al. (2013) provided some explanation to this finding based their assertion that women were cautious about engaging in active or problem-solving coping strategies (e.g. confronting the issues) as they also had to avoid playing to the negative stereotype of being labelled the “angry black women” (Lewis, Mendenhall, Harwood, & Hunt, 2013). Baker & Berenbaum (2007) offered another possible explanation to the finding by proposing that men find it more comfortable to utilise problem-solving coping styles based on their socialisation, where men have been encouraged to be independent and solve their own problems. This also meant that men are not as equipped to deal with complex emotions, which results in men being less efficient in utilising both problem-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies (Baker & Berenbaum, 2007).

The analysis of the existing literature on coping with racial discrimination shows that a vast majority of literature is focused on black women, specifically in the United States of America. Secondly, there seems to be an ongoing debate about the ability to assess the efficacy of coping strategies given the influence of context and personal traits. For example, contrary to other research by Hershcovis et al. (2018), Raskauskas & Huynh (2015) and Van den Brande et al. (2016), Baker & Berenbaum (2007) found that in certain instances problem-focused coping strategies were counterproductive, specifically where the individual engaging in problem-focused coping rushes into a particular strategy without the adequate emotional intelligence (Baker & Berenbaum, 2007). Finally, there is no standardised taxonomy to categorise the coping strategies into easily comparable themes, despite the use of

the TMSC in some cases (Skinner & Edge, 2003). A summary of the coping strategies related to racial discrimination covered in the literature review (Tomlinson, Muzio, Sommerlad, Webley, & Duff, 2013; DeCuir-Gunby, et al., 2020; Sisco, 2020; Shorter-Gooden, 2004; Holder, Jackson, & Ponterotto, 2015; Spates, Evans, Watts, Abubakar, & James, 2020; Lewis, Mendenhall, Harwood, & Hunt, 2013) is contained in the appendix 1. This allowed for easier contrasts and comparison across the various findings and to aid in assessing the findings of this study against previous findings.

It is in response to this gap in the literature and the call from other authors that this study intends to provide insights and further knowledge into the experiences and strategies of successful black professionals in senior leadership positions. More specifically, this research aimed to explore the coping strategies that black leaders in top and senior management roles have employed to survive and succeed in South Africa's private sector. Based on the gaps identified in the literature, this study set out to achieve the following objectives;

- (1) obtain a better appreciation of the racial barriers encountered by senior and top management in the South African private sector (Wyatt & Silvester, 2015),
- (2) understand the differences and similarities in the coping strategies adopted by different genders among black senior and top managers to overcome racially-based barriers (Folkman & Moskowitz, 2004; Tomlinson, Muzio, Sommerlad, Webley, & Duff, 2013; Imoagene, 2019).
- (3) uncover how self-efficacy theory helps us understand the coping strategies adopted by black senior and top managers to overcome racially-based barriers (Bandura, 1997; Lunenburg, 2011).

3. Chapter 4: Research Methodology

3.1 Proposed Methodology

According to Saunders & Lewis (2018), there are five research philosophies a researcher can adopt when conducting research, namely; positivism, critical realism, interpretivism, postmodernism and pragmatism. Selection of the appropriate research philosophy depends on the beliefs and assumptions about the development and nature of the knowledge (Saunders & Lewis, 2018). Given that the primary objective of this study was to explore the coping strategies (perspectives) of black professionals (in their roles) in corporate South Africa (context), an interpretivism philosophy was selected as it is relevant when one seeks to understand the perspectives of subjects in their roles as social actors (Saunders & Lewis, 2018). Unlike positivism which is more rigid and seeks to develop theory or rules which are generalisable, interpretivism appreciates the role that context plays in understanding phenomena (Thanh & Thanh, 2015).

Approach

According to Bansal, Smith, & Vaara (2018), “inductive theorising is a cornerstone of qualitative research” (Bansal, Smith, & Vaara, 2018, p. 1189). Induction is most appropriate when attempting to gain a better appreciation of the subject’s perspective (Saunders & Lewis, 2018). An inductive approach to theory development is appropriate when qualitative data is collected in a new or not so well understood context (Bansal, Smith, & Vaara, 2018). This also allows the researcher to surface new insights and to gain a deeper understanding of the subject. Coping strategies applied by black leaders have been explored in different contexts, for example in the United States of America, Holder, Jackson, & Ponterotto (2015) have investigated coping strategies of women in corporate leadership in America, while locally authors like Khuzwayo (2018) and Pillay (2019), have investigated the barriers that face women in leadership. There is a lack of research in the South African context that also considers the male group and one that focuses on the application of coping strategies. Both Khuzwayo (2018) and Pillay (2019), recommended that a broader understanding of the phenomenon and its dynamics in South Africa warrants further

research into the topic, i.e. to explore, compare and contrast the strategies employed by black professionals (Khuzwayo, 2018; Pillay, 2019). Wyatt & Silvester (2015) propose that managers who have navigated and succeeded on their journey to the top are well placed to provide advice on the challenges, opportunities and the interpretation of the barriers. Therefore, the selected strategy was aligned to the primary objective of this study, which was intended to gain a better appreciation of the subjects' perceptions considering their context.

A mono method qualitative study was employed to obtain a better appreciation of the subjects' coping strategies. The qualitative research method was deemed appropriate, as it is applied in cases where the intention is to obtain a deep understanding of some behaviour/phenomenon in a particular context (Thanh & Thanh, 2015; Zikmund, Babin, Carr, & Griffin, 2013). In the case of this study, the coping strategies adopted by the subjects as a result of the context (racial barriers) that they find themselves in. Thanh & Thanh (2015) describes the relationship between interpretivist paradigm and qualitative methodology as the former being methodological approach the latter as a means in collecting data (Thanh & Thanh, 2015). Furthermore, these researchers suggest that it is common for researchers who seek to understand individual experiences and perceptions from the data to make use of interpretivist paradigm and qualitative methods, rather than rely on numbers or statistics (Thanh & Thanh, 2015).

In their review of methods used in leadership research, Parry, Mumford, Bower, & Watts (2014) highlight some of the important justifications of using qualitative methods in leadership research as (1) when the researcher is trying to extend a novel phenomenon that has previously been studied quantitatively, (2) attempting to understand any social phenomenon from the perspective of the actor and (3) when one is attempting to understand phenomena that are difficult to describe quantitatively (Parry, Mumford, Bower, & Watts, 2014). Given the fact that this study intended to explore the experiences and coping strategies of the subjects, the qualitative method was deemed well suited to achieve the research objectives. Exploratory studies are most useful when seeking to understand a topic that has not been well researched or is well understood by the researcher (Saunders & Lewis, 2018). Furthermore, exploratory studies provide better flexibility, deeper insights and

work well with qualitative research methods such as semi-structured interviews (Saunders & Lewis, 2018).

The type of research strategy that was utilised in this study was informed by the research questions that the researcher aimed to answer (Creswell, Hanson, Plano, & Morales, 2007). The focus of the research was to understand the life experience of an individual and how they unfold over time which lent itself to a narrative research design (Creswell, Hanson, Plano, & Morales, 2007). In this type of research strategy, the researcher aims to study an individual by collecting stories of individual experiences and “chronologically ordering the meaning of those experiences” (Creswell, Hanson, Plano, & Morales, p. 240).

Narrative research also allows the researcher to follow a specific contextual focus or follow a guiding theoretical perspective. This was especially relevant in this research project as it explored the perspective of the participants in their context as leaders in a South African private sector context, underpinned by a theoretical framework of microaggressions (Sue et al., 2007), the transactional model of stress and coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1987) and self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). The suitability of this strategy was further supported by Saunders & Lewis (2018) who stated that the objective of a narrative strategy is to gain a deeper understanding of organisational dynamics through the experiences of the members (Saunders & Lewis, 2018). The coping strategies used by black leaders are in the context of their professional environment, seeking to better understand why and how certain individuals had been able to overcome barriers associated with being a minority and its manifestations the private sector leadership structures.

This was a cross-sectional study (Saunders & Lewis, 2018) in which data were collected from 14 male and female respondents from across the Gauteng province over a three-week period. In-depth, semi-structured interviews were utilised as the data collection method. This was selected as it has been highlighted as the most suitable way of executing the narrative enquiry, as it allows participants to give an account of an experience with the researcher playing the role of a narrator (Saunders & Lewis, 2018).

3.2 Population

The population is the complete set of people that can be interviewed (Saunders & Lewis, 2018). For this study, the population is black South African male and female senior managers, and executives who have had at least one-year experience in a senior management (or higher) role in the South African private sector.

3.3 Unit of analysis

The study sought to understand the coping strategies of black South African male and female senior and top managers. This necessitates the unit of analysis to be at the individual level, more specifically, to understand their personal experiences (perceptions) with coping in the workplace (Saunders & Lewis, 2018). In this study, the unit of analysis was the individual experiences of black male and female participants.

3.4 Sampling method and size

The researcher adopted a combination of non-probability purposive and snowball sampling to identify a list of suitable respondents for the study. Non-probability sampling is a group of sampling techniques that are used when one does not have a sampling frame (Saunders & Lewis, 2018). This sampling technique was also suitable for this study as it is often used in conjunction with qualitative data collection techniques, as was employed in this particular study (Saunders & Lewis, 2018).

Purposive sampling refers to an approach in which the researcher selects the sample using their knowledge and judgement to identify the most suitable candidates for the research (Saunders & Lewis, 2018). Purposive sampling is the most widely used sampling method in qualitative studies and is most appropriate when the researcher is interested in finding people best placed to provide insights (Elo et al., 2014).

The following criteria were used to identify and ensure that the participants aligned with the objectives of the research. Firstly, the respondents had to be black Africans as defined in the (Republic of South Africa, 1998); this is because the study sought to explore the experiences of black senior and top manager in the private sector given lack of representation in those levels of the organisations in the South African private sector. Secondly, the participants needed to be senior or top managers in their

organisation, this is defined as the executive (for a top manager) or direct reports to the executive level (for senior managers) in an organisation. Thirdly, the participant had to be employed in a company based in South Africa, given the focus of the study is to understand the phenomenon in a South African context. Finally, a deliberate effort was made to identify an equal number of male and female participants. This was to attempt to draw contrasts and similarities between the male and female respondents' experiences. An initial list of potential candidates was developed using the researcher's network in line with the criteria above. This was complemented by a snowball sampling approach in which additional respondents were obtained through referrals from the initial list of interviewees (Saunders & Lewis, 2018) until the sample size was sufficient to achieve saturation. In addition, the researcher strived to ensure that the sample represented a wide variety of industries to ensure as a broad range of perspectives to be obtained. Research conducted by Guest, Bunce, & Johnson (2006), to provide guidelines on the sample sizes of non-probabilistic samples, shows that saturation is generally observed within the first 12 interviews (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006). In this research, a total of 14 (seven female and seven male) respondents were identified to ensure that there was sufficient data collected to approach saturation and enhance the credibility of the research (Elo et al., 2014).

Table 1 and Table 2 below provide an overview of the research participants. An equal number of black male and female respondents were interviewed across a broad range of industries, namely; Engineering services – 4; Fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) – 2, Financial services – 4; Accounting -1; Pharmaceutical – 1; Management consulting – 1; and Chairman in various industries – 1. Given the sampling approach and the researcher's limited network, it was not possible to obtain an even spread across all sectors.

Table 1: Demographic information of participants

| Respondent | Gender | Role | Industry | Duration |
|-------------------|---------------|------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Respondent 1 | Male | Senior Manager | FMCG | 59:27:00 |
| Respondent 2 | Female | Executive | Financial services | 57:38:00 |
| Respondent 3 | Female | Senior Executive | Pharmaceutical | 65:20:00 |
| Respondent 4 | Female | Senior Manager | Financial services | 58:26:00 |
| Respondent 5 | Male | Senior Manager | FMCG | 59:31:00 |
| Respondent 6 | Male | Chairman | Various industries | 52:04:00 |
| Respondent 7 | Male | Executive | Accounting institute | 59:48:00 |
| Respondent 8 | Female | Executive | Engineering services | 73:00:00 |
| Respondent 9 | Female | Senior Manager | Financial services | 48:17:00 |
| Respondent 10 | Female | Senior Manager | Management Consulting | 54:55:00 |
| Respondent 11 | Male | Executive | Financial services | 39:11:00 |
| Respondent 12 | Male | Senior Manager | Engineering services | 67:00:00 |
| Respondent 13 | Male | Executive | Engineering services | 58:15:00 |
| Respondent 14 | Female | Senior Manager | Engineering services | 52:20:00 |

The spread of the respondents by the role and gender is indicated in table 2 below:

Table 2: Spread of respondents by role and gender

| Role | Female | Male | Total |
|----------------------------|---------------|-------------|--------------|
| Chairman of several boards | | 1 | 1 |
| Executive | 3 | 3 | 6 |
| Senior Manager | 4 | 3 | 7 |
| Grand Total | 7 | 7 | 14 |

3.5 Measurement instrument

Semi-structured, face to face interviews was utilised to collect the data. Semi-structured interviews are considered particularly useful when the researcher wants to get the participant to tell their story from their perspective and gain insights into the experience of the individuals being interviewed (Saunders & Lewis, 2018). The measurement instrument was an interview schedule developed to achieve the

research purpose and objectives informed by the constructs of the literature review. The interview schedule was centred around the four key themes of the research, namely; understanding the nature of the barriers, understanding the coping strategies used by these black leaders in their environment, understanding the differences and/or similarities in the coping approaches adopted by male and female respondents and understanding whether personal traits had an influence in the coping strategy adopted. These themes were supported by a number of probing questions to assist in ensuring that the interview process is focused on the objectives of the research. Care was taken to ensure that the questions are open-ended to allow the respondents to provide as much of their experiences as possible without being directed by the structure of the questions and therefore introducing biases (Elo et al., 2014). The measurement instrument was assessed for effectiveness throughout the process, beginning with a pilot interview followed by a series of reviews throughout the interview process to refine and update the interview schedule based on the learnings in the field (Elo et al., 2014).

3.6 Data gathering process

Data was collected through, semi-structured, open-ended, in-depth interviews of the 14 participants and one pilot interview over Microsoft Teams video conferencing facility. In The use of the semi-structured method of data collection is recommended based on a number of benefits, namely; they allow for less structured follow-ups and also enable the interviewer the flexibility to concentrate on specific issues when necessary (Zikmund, Babin, Carr, & Griffin, 2013). Furthermore, using broad, expansive questions also allows the participant to venture into several directions which could be a source of valuable insights (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012). Each participant completed a consent form to ensure that data is protected and used in a responsible manner (Saunders & Lewis, 2018). In light of the COVID lockdown, the interviews were conducted over a video conferencing facility Microsoft Teams. The same platform was used for all 14 interviews in which the researcher had their camera's on for the introduction and subsequently switched off the video facility due to limitations in bandwidth. The interviews were recorded using at Microsoft Teams functionality and the onboard recording application on the researcher's laptop. This was to ensure that the data is not lost in the event that one of the recording devices

malfunctions. The electronic recordings were then shared with a third party which assisted in the process of converting the audio recordings to electronic transcripts which would later be used for data analysis. The average interview lasted 57 minutes, resulting in the total audio recording time of 805 minutes (13,4 hours) for all 14 interviews, which were then converted to Microsoft Word transcripts. These transcripts were reviewed by the researcher against the audio recordings to ensure that the transcripts were representative of the interviews and to remove any transcriber errors.

Pilot interview

As indicated earlier in the section, one pilot interview was conducted to refine the interview schedule and enhance the researchers interviewing techniques (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012). Learnings from the pilot interviews were incorporated into the interview process (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012). These included the additions of a contextual opening at the beginning of the interview to provide the respondents with the context and objectives of the research, the streamlining of research questions to reduce the length of the interviews from 90 minutes to 60 minutes to increase the number of respondents willing to participate in the research (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012).

The interviews and the data analysis were conducted in parallel with the analysis resuming after the third interview was conducted. This enabled the researcher to make adjustments to the interview process to enhance the efficacy of the process while maintaining the integrity of the data collection process. One of the key changes in the interview process was the adoption of the first interview question to allow the respondents to provide a brief overview of their professional career and experiences leading up to their current role. It became apparent that it was difficult to focus on the experiences of the current role without reflecting on some of the hurdles and barriers leading up to roles that the respondents currently occupy. This proved to be a valuable insight as some of these recollections informed the way that the respondents make sense of the world and respond to the challenges presented by the racial barriers. A second significant alteration to the data collection process was the revision of the gender-specific question. Most respondents found it difficult to provide their perspective on the contrast between the coping strategies applied by

men and women. This question was relegated to be a sub-question that followed a broader question on coping strategies. As part of the interview process, it became easier for the respondent to make reference to how they have observed the coping strategies manifest across the gender line when dealing with this question.

3.7 Analysis approach

The analysis approach adopted for this study was qualitative content analysis which focuses on examining language for the purpose of classifying it into categories of similar meaning (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). There are three key content analysis approaches that can be used when analysing qualitative data: conventional, directed and summative, depending on the objective and context of the research study. The most relevant to this particular study was conventional content analysis which is utilised when the researcher aims to describe a phenomenon with limited existing theory or research literature (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Content analysis is the most frequently used qualitative research technique in leadership research (Parry, Mumford, Bower, & Watts, 2014). Conventional content analysis allows the researcher to follow an inductive approach in which the data is to understand the phenomenon through coding a large amount of text into meaningful and manageable codes, code categories and themes (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). This allowed the researcher to better appreciate the experiences of the participants directly from their accounts and therefore minimising the researcher's bias (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). This approach was in line with the research objectives which aims to understand that experiences of black senior and top managers from their perspectives. Utilising the conventional content analysis, the interview transcripts were uploaded to a qualitative data analysis tool (Atlas ti version 9) for analysis. An iterative, structured data analysis approach, as suggested by Braun & Clarke (2006), was followed. A total of 258 codes were generated from the 14 transcripts. The initial interview generated 65 codes which declined with each transcript until the seventh interview where the number of new codes generated fell and stabilised at below ten new codes. This indicated that the researcher was approaching saturation, and no additional interviews were conducted after an even amount of male and female respondents had been achieved. The 258 codes were further analysed and grouped into 31 code categories (code groups) based to organise them into

meaningful clusters (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). The initial round of coding was facilitated by the themes in the research questions and literature review while identifying additional emerging themes from the empirical data. Transcribed data were analysed in parallel to the interview process to allow for refinement of the data collection process, improve the effectiveness of the interviews in line with the research objectives, and to ensure that saturation was achieved (Elo et al., 2014). This allowed the researcher to follow an iterative coding process to ensure generated codes were consistently reviewed to ensure consistency in the coding criteria throughout the coding process. This process included a review and discussion with the research supervisor on the initial set of results and codes as an added measure to improve conformability and reduce researcher bias (Elo et al., 2014; Miles & Huberman, 1994). The figure below illustrates the number of new codes generated per transcript. It is evident from the graphs that the researcher started approaching saturation from the seventh interview; however, additional respondents were interviewed to ensure a balance between male and female respondents.

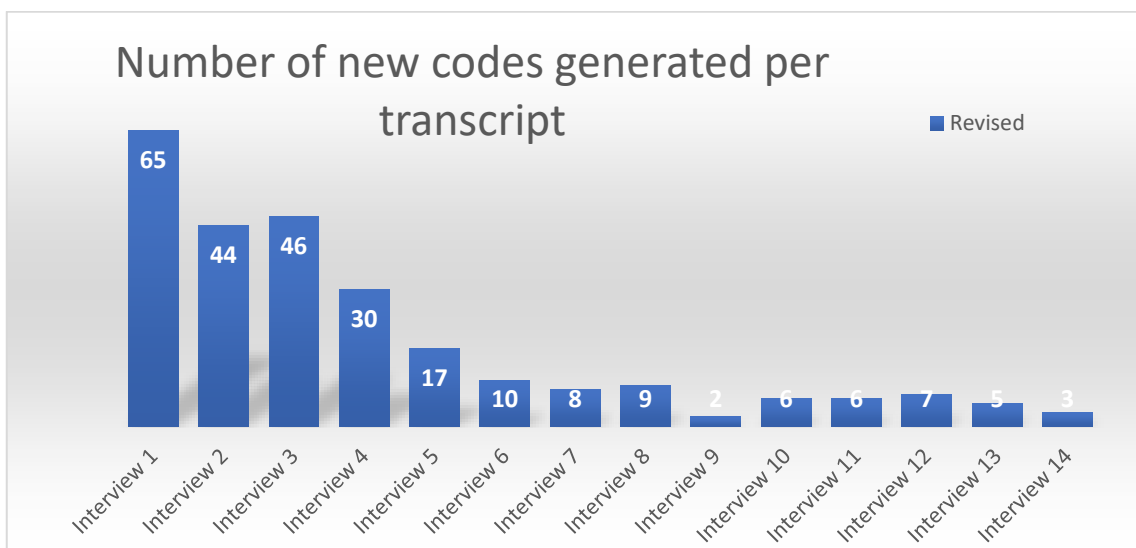


Figure 1: Number of new codes generated per transcript

3.8 Quality controls

Trustworthiness is a term used to describe the integrity of the content development and analysis process and is usually a collection of four quality control processes, namely; credibility, dependability, conformability, transferability. It is important to note that although the elements considered in the trustworthiness of this research have been described as separate elements in a sequential manner, the application of

these concepts was conducted throughout the research process to ensure the quality of the research is controlled throughout the process. These considerations have been indicated in the previous sections of this document, the next couple of paragraphs aim to summarise the quality control process applied in this research.

Credibility speaks to how well the data collection process adheres to the initial intention of the research by its alignment to the research questions (Elo et al., 2014). Given that this study aims to understand the experiences of black professionals in senior and top management in relation to racial barriers and the appropriate coping strategies, the use of the semi-structured interview process was limited to ensuring that the interview remains within the focus of the research. The research questions were continuously revised to take into account the learnings while ensuring that they are consistent and aligned with the research objective. Research questions were kept minimum and open-ended to ensure that the key aspects of the research are covered. The interview schedule and efficacy of the interview process was tested using pilot interviews to assist in reducing error in the measurement process (Kimberlin & Winterstein, 2008).

A second key component of trustworthiness is dependability which refers to the stability of the data under different contexts, researchers and methods (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This is similar to the concept of reliability which refers to the consistency of data collection and analysis which to allow for repeatability and validation of the research by other researchers (Saunders & Lewis, 2018; Rolfe, 2004). Some of the key considerations for this study, was the sample, selection, and sample size to ensure representation and saturation in the content analysis process, respectively. Very clear criteria were defined to ensure the sample aligned with the objectives of the study. Despite the limitations in the researcher's network, the combination of purposive and snowball sampling ensured that the respondents met the criteria of the research. Over and above the sampling approach described in this report, data was transcribed and analysed in parallel to the interview process. This allowed for refinement of the data collection process, improve the effectiveness of the interviews in line research objectives, and verification of when saturation is achieved (Elo et al., 2014). This is also in line with the recommendations also provided by Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson, & Spiers, (2002) who recommended that

the quality control should be conducted throughout the research process to eliminate any last-minute unpleasant surprises (Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson, & Spiers, 2002).

Conformability relates to how well the collected data represents the views or actual inputs provided by the participants in this study and therefore reducing researcher bias (Elo et al., 2014; Miles & Huberman, 1994). One of the key areas that require attention to ensure the integrity of the results is the content organisation phase which includes coding, categorisation and analysis of the transcripts. The researcher continuously reviewed coding criteria to ensure consistency has been applied throughout the coding process. The initial set of results and codes were discussed with the researcher's supervisor and reviewed throughout the process to ensure they best represent the views of the participants.

Transferability is the degree to which the research findings are generalisable. A key component of the quality control aspect is in ensuring that the scope, boundary and limitations of the generalisability were well understood (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This research project was limited to the experiences of black professionals in senior and top management in the South African private sector. The context was unique to South Africa; caution must be exercised before any of the conclusions can be generalised to any context (Elo et al., 2014; Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson, & Spiers, 2002).

3.9 Limitations

There are several limitations related to the proposed research methodology, as indicated below:

- Given that the sample of the study is senior managers in the private sector, there may be a challenge in obtaining a sufficient number of participants.
- Low spread across different industries and the geographical limitations in the sample (managers in Gauteng) means that the findings are not necessarily generalisable beyond the current context.
- COVID 19 lockdown meant that all the interviews were conducted over Microsoft Teams with only the introductory section of the interview conducted with the video on. This means that some of the physical cues such as body

language, facial expression and posture were not observed during these interviews. (Saunders & Lewis, 2018)

- The researcher has no prior experience in interview data gathering process which may result in interview bias, interpretation bias, and response bias limiting the objectivity

4. Reference List

- Anderson, C. (2010). Presenting and Evaluating Qualitative Research. *American Journal*.
- Baker, J., & Berenbaum, H. (2007). Emotional approach and problem-focused coping: A comparison of potentially adaptive strategies. *COGNITION AND EMOTION*, 21(1), 95-118. doi:10.1080/02699930600562276
- Bandura, A. (1997). Self-efficacy. *Harvard Mental Health Letter.*, 13(9), 4.
- Bansal, P., Smith, W., & Vaara, E. (2018). New ways of seeing through qualitative research. *Academy of Management Journal*, 61(4), 1189-1195.
- Besharov, D. J. (2006). Affirmative action: what do we know? *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 25(2), 463–490.
- Bloomberg, L., & Volpe, M. (2012). *Completing your qualitative dissertation*. United States of America: SAGE Publications.
- Booyesen, L. (2007). Barriers to employment equity implementation and retention of blacks in management in South Africa. *South African Journal of Labour Relations*, 31(1), 47-41.
- Booyesen, L. (2007). Barriers to employment equity implementation and retention of blacks in management in South Africa. *South African Journal of Labour Relations*, 31(1), 47-41.
- Boswell, R. (2014). Black faces, white spaces - adjusting self to manage aversive racism in South Africa. *Africa Insight*, 44, 1 - 14.
- Businessstech. (2020, February 4). *South Africa's big employment equity shake-up is coming*. Retrieved from Businessstech: <https://businessstech.co.za/news/business/370656/south-africas-big-employment-equity-shake-up-is-coming/>
- Carton, A. M., & Rosette, A. S. (2011). Explaining bias against black leaders : integrating theory on information processing and goal-based stereotyping. *Academy of Management Journal*, 54(6), 1141–1158.
- Chanland, E., & Murphy, W. (2018). Propelling diverse leaders to the top: A developmental network approach. *Human Resource Management*, 57(1), 111-126.
- Chrobot-Mason, D., & Aramovich, N. (2013). The Psychological Benefits of Creating an Affirming Climate for Workplace Diversity. *Group & Organization Management*, 38(6), 659–689.
- Cortina, L., Kabat-Farr, D., Leskinen, E., Huerta, M., & Mangle, V. (2013). Selective Incivility as Modern Discrimination in Organisations: Evidence and Impact. *Journal of Management*, 39(6), 1579-1605. doi: 10.1177/0149206311418835

- Creswell, J. W., Hanson, W. E., Plano, V. L., & Morales, A. (2007). Qualitative Research Designs Selection and Implementation. *The Counselling Psychologist, 35*(2), 236-264.
- Cronqvist, A., Klang, B., & Björvell, H. (1997). The use and efficacy of coping strategies and coping styles in a Swedish sample. *Quality of Life Research, 6*, 87–96.
- DeCuir-Gunby, J. T., Johnson, O., Edwards, C., McCoy, W.N, & A.M, W. (2020). African American professionals in higher education: experiencing and coping with racial microaggressions. *Race Ethnicity and Education, 23*(4), 492-508. doi: 10.1080/13613324.2019.1579706
- Deitch, A., Barsky, A., Butz, R., Chan, S., Brief, A., & Bradley, J. (2003). Subtle yet significant: the existence and impact of everyday racial discrimination in the workplace. *Human Relations, 56*(11), 1299-1324.
- Deitch, E. A., Barsky, A., Butz, R. M., Chan, S., Brief, A. P., & Bradley, J. C. (2003). Subtle yet significant: The existence and impact of everyday racial discrimination in the workplace. *Human Relations, 56*(11), 1299-1324.
- Department of Labour. (2018). *18th Commission for Employment Equity. Annual Report 2*. Pretoria. Retrieved from Retrieved from <http://www.labour.gov.za/DOL/documents/annual-reports/Commission for Employment Equity Report/2017-2018/downloads/documents/annual-repo>
- Department of Labour. (2019). *19th Commission for Employment Equity Annual Report 2018-2019*. Pretoria: Department of Labour Chief Directorate of Communication.
- Dovidio, J., & Gaertner, S. (2000). Aversive racism in selection decisions: 1989 and 1999. . *Psychological Science, 11*, 315–19.
- Dovidio, J., Pearson, A., & Penner, L. (2018). Aversive Racism, Implicit Bias, and Microaggressions. In C. Capodilupo, K. Nadal, D. Rivera, P. Sue, & G. (. Torino (Eds.), *Microaggression theory: influence and implications* (pp. 1-26). NJ: Wiley. doi:DOI:10.1002/9781119466642.ch2.
- Elo, S., Kääriäinen, M., Kanste, K., Pölkki, T., Utriainen, K., & Kyngäs, H. (2014). Qualitative Content Analysis: A Focus on Trustworthiness. *Sage Open*(2014), 1-10.
- Essed, P. (1991). *Understanding everyday racism: An interdisciplinary theory*. California: Sage Publications.
- Eswaran, V. (2019, April 29). *The business case for diversity in the workplace is now overwhelming*. Retrieved from World Economic Forum: <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/04/business-case-for-diversity-in-the-workplace/>
- Festekjian, A., Tram, S., Murray, C., Sy, T., & Huynh, H. (2014). Perceptions, I See Me the Way You See Me: The Influence of Race on Interpersonal and

- Intrapersonal Leadership. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, 21(1), 102-119.
- Folkman, S., & Moskowitz, J. T. (2004). COPING: Pitfalls and Promise. *Psychology*, 55, 745-774.
- Greer, T. M., & Cavallieri, C. K. (2019). The role of coping strategies in understanding the effects of institutional racism on mental health outcomes for African American men. *Journal of Black Psychology*, 45(5), 405-433. doi:tps://doi.org/10.1177/0095798419868105
- Guest, G., Bunce, A., & Johnson, L. (2006). How Many Interviews Are Enough? An Experiment with Data Saturation and Variability. *Field Methods*, 18(1), 59-82.
- Han, D., Duhachek, A., & Agrawal, N. (2016). Coping and Construal Level Matching Drives Health Message Effectiveness via ResponseEfficacy or Self Efficacy Enhancement. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 43, 429-447.
- Hennekam, S., & Syed, J. (2018). Institutional racism in the film industry: a multilevel perspective. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal*, 37(6), 551-565. doi:DOI 10.1108/EDI-05-2017-0108
- Holder, A., Jackson, M., & Ponterotto, J. G. (2015). Racial microaggression experiences and coping strategies of black women in corporate leadership. *American Psychological Association*, 2(2), 164-180. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/qp0000024
- Hsieh, H., & Shannon, S. (2005, November). Three Approaches to Qualitative Content Analysis. *Qualitative Health Research*, 15(9), 1277-1288.
- Imoagene, O. (2019). The Nigerian Second Generation at Work in Britain: Ethnoracial Exclusion and Adaptive Strategies. *Sociology*, 52(3), 264-279.
- International Monetary Fund. (2020, January 3). *International Monetary Fund*. Retrieved from Six Charts Explain South Africa's Inequality: <https://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2020/01/29/na012820six-charts-on-south-africas-persistent-and-multi-faceted-inequality>
- Jackson, P. B., & Stewart, Q. T. (2003). A research agenda for the black middle class: work stress, survival strategies and mental health. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 44, 442-455.
- Jacob, S. A., & Furgerson, S. P. (2012). Writing interview protocols and conducting interviews: Tips for students new to the field of qualitative research. *The qualitative report*, 17(42), 1-10.
- Jones, S. D. (2020). *Understanding faultline activation and gender discrimination in traditionally segregated occupations*. 2020: Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria.

- Khuzwayo, T. (2018). *An exploratory study of the leadership experiences of senior African female executives in the private sector*. Johannesburg: Gordon Institute of Business Sciences.
- Kimberlin, C. L., & Winterstein, A. G. (2008). Validity and reliability of measurement instruments used in research. *American Society of Health-System Pharmacists - System Pharmacy*, 65(23), 2276-2284.
- Larcker, D. F., & Tayan, B. (2020). *Fortune 100 C-Suite organisational Charts*. Stanford Graduate School of Business. Retrieved from <https://edition.cnn.com/2020/06/02/success/diversity-and-black-leadership-in-corporate-america/index.html>
- Lazarus, R. S., & Folkman, S. (1987). Transactional theory and research on emotions and coping. *European Journal of Personality*, 1, 141-169.
- Lazarus, R. S., & Folkman, S. (1987). Transactional theory and research on emotions and coping. *European Journal of Personality*, 1, 141-169.
- Leteane, M. (2018). *Factors needed to realise an inclusive climate within a diverse workplace: a focus on black female*. Johannesburg: Gordon Institute of Business Sciences.
- Lewin, E., & Sager, J. (2010). The Influence of Personal Characteristics and Coping Strategies on Salespersons' Turnover Intentions. *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, 30(4), 355-370.
- Lewis, J. A., Mendenhall, R., Harwood, S., & Hunt, M. (2013). Coping with Gendered Racial Microaggressions among Black Women College Students. *Journal of African American Studies*, 17, 51-73. doi:DOI 10.1007/s12111-012-9219-0
- Luksyte, A., Waite, E., Avery, D., & Roy, R. (2013). Held to a different standard: Racial differences in the impact of lateness on advancement opportunity. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 86, 142-165.
- Lunenburg, F. (2011). Self-Efficacy in the Workplace: Implications for Motivation and Performance. *International journal of management, business, and administration*, 14(1), 1-6.
- McCord, M., Joseph, D. L., Dhanani, L. Y., & Beus, J. M. (2018). A Meta-Analysis of Sex and Race Differences in Perceived Workplace Mistreatment. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 137-163.
- McKinsey & Company. (2020). *Diversity Wins: How inclusion matters*. London, Atlanta, Chicago: McKinsey & Company.
- Miles, B. M., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis Second Edition*. California: Sage Publications Inc.
- Morse, J., Barrett, M., Mayan, M., Olson, K., & Spiers, J. (2002). Verification Strategies for Establishing Reliability and Validity in Qualitative Research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 1(2), 1-10.

- Mühlhaus, J., & Bouwmeester, O. (2016). The paradoxical effect of self-categorisation on work stress in a high-status occupation: Insights from management consulting. *Human Relations*, 69(9), 1823-1852.
- Nadal, K., Davidoff, K., Davis, L., & Wong, Y. (2015). A qualitative approach to intersectional microaggressions: understanding influences of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and religion. *Qualitative Psychology*, 2(2), 147-163. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/qap0000026
- Ndaba, B. (2019, August 27). *Nxesi urged to act against companies excluding blacks from top positions*. Retrieved from IOL: <https://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/nxesi-urged-to-act-against-companies-excluding-blacks-from-top-positions-31382371>
- Noon, M. (2018). Pointless diversity training: unconscious bias, new racism and agency. *Work, Employment and Society*, 32(1), 198-209. doi:DOI: 10.1177/0950017017719841
- Obenauera, W. G., & Langer, N. (2019). Inclusion is not a slam dunk: A study of differential leadership outcomes in the absence of a glass cliff. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 30, 1-7.
- Page, O. (2015). *What factors differentiate an effective employment equity implementation strategy from an ineffective strategy in South African organisations and how does this impact on employees' perceptions of organisational justice?* Johannesburg: Gordon Institute of Business Science.
- Parry, K., Mumford, M., Bower, I., & Watts, L. (2014). Qualitative and historiometric methods in leadership research: A review of the first 25 years of The Leadership Quarterly. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 25(1), 132-151.
- Pillay, S. (2019). *Social identity theory and self-efficacy theory: exploring exploring narratives of female executives in corporate South Africa*. Johannesburg: Gordon Institute of Business Science.
- Pillay, S. (2019). *Social identity theory and self-efficacy theory: exploring narratives of female executives in corporate South Africa*. Johannesburg: Gordon Institute of Business Science.
- Pitcan, M., Park-Taylor, J., & Hayslett, J. (2018). Black men and racial microaggressions at work. *The Career Development Quarterly*, 66, 300-314. doi:DOI: 10.1002/cdq.12152
- Ragins, B. R., & Sundstrom, E. (1989). Gender and power in organisations: A longitudinal perspective. *Psychological Bulletin*, 105(1), 51-88.
- Raskauskas, J., & Huynh, A. (2015). The process of coping with cyberbullying: A systematic review. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 23, 118-125.
- Rautenbach, E. (2019). *Perceived stress, coping self-efficacy and adaptive coping strategies of South African teachers*. Nort West: North West University.

- Republic of South Africa. (1998). *Employment Equity Act, No. 55 of 1998*. Republic of South Africa: The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa.
- Robbins, S., & Judge, T. (2007). *Organisational Behaviour, 12th edition*. New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Roberts, L., & Mayo, A. J. (2019, November). *Toward a racially just workplace - Diversity efforts are failing black employees. Here's a better approach*. Retrieved from Harvard Business Review: <https://hbr.org/cover-story/2019/11/toward-a-racially-just-workplace>
- Rolfe, G. (2004). Validity, trustworthiness and rigour: quality and the idea of qualitative research. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 53(3), 1-7.
- Rowe, M. (1990). Barriers to equality: the power of subtle discrimination to maintain unequal opportunity. *Employee Responsibilities and Rights Journal*, 3(2), 153-163.
- Saunders, M., & Lewis, P. (2018). *Doing Research in Business & Management: An Essential Guide to Planning Your Project* (2nd ed.). Essex: Pearson Education Limited.
- Selby, K., & Sutherland, M. (2006). "Space creation": a strategy for achieving employment equity at senior management level. *South African Journal of Labour Relations*, 30(2), 42-65.
- Shongwe, B. R. (2019). *Barriers Contributing to Women Chief Executive Officers' Underrepresentation in Johannesburg Stock Exchange Listed Companies*. Johannesburg: Gordon Institute of Business Sciences.
- Shorter-Gooden, K. (2004). Multiple resistance strategies: how African American women cope with racism and sexism. *Journal of Black Psychology*, 30, 406–425. doi:DOI: 10.1177/0095798404266050
- Sisco, S. (2020). Race-Conscious Career Development: Exploring Self-Preservation and Coping Strategies of Black Professionals in Corporate America. *Advances in developing human resources*, 22(4), 419-436. doi:DOI: 10.1177/1523422320948885
- Skinner, E., & Edge, K. (2003). Searching for the structure of coping: a review and critique of category systems for classifying ways of coping. *Psychological Bulletin*, 129(2), 216–269. doi:DOI: 10.1037/0033-2909.129.2.216
- Spates, K., Evans, N., Watts, B., Abubakar, N., & James, T. (2020). Keeping Ourselves Sane: A Qualitative Exploration of Black Women's. *Sex Roles*, 82, 513–524. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-019-01077-1>
- Sue, D. W., Capodilupo, C. M., Torino, G. C., Bucceri, J. M., Holder, A. M., Nadal, K. L., & Esquilin, M. (2007). Racial microaggressions in everyday life: Implications for clinical practice. *American Psychologist*, 62, 271–286. doi:doi:10.1037/0003-066x.

- Tajfel, H. (1978). *Differentiation between social groups: studies in the social psychology of intergroup relations*. London: Academic Press.
- Taylor, S., & Stanton, A. (2007). Coping resources, coping processes, and mental health. *Annual Review of Clinical Psychology*, 3, 377-401.
doi:<https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.clinpsy.3.022806.091520>
- Thanh, N. T., & Thanh, T. (2015). The Interconnection Between Interpretivist Paradigm and Qualitative Methods in Education. *American Journal of Educational Science*, 1(2), 24-27.
- Tomlinson, J., Muzio, D., Sommerlad, H., Webley, L., & Duff, L. (2013). Structure, agency and career strategies of white women and black and minority ethnic individuals in the legal profession. *human relations*, 66(2), 245-269.
- Triana, M., Jayasinghe, M., & Pieper, J. (2015). Perceived workplace racial discrimination and its correlates : A meta-analysis. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 36, 291-513.
- Weeto, N. (2019). *Barriers to Transformation Within The South African Banking Sector* . Johannesburg: Gordon Institute of Business Sciences.
- Wingfield, A. H. (2019). How Organisations Are Failing Black Workers - and How to Do Better. *Havard Business Review*, 1-6.
- Wingfield, A., & Cahvez, K. (2020). Getting in, getting hired, getting sideways looks: organisational hierarchy and perceptions of racial discrimination. *American Sociological Review*, 85(1), 31-37. doi:DOI: 10.1177/0003122419894335
- Wingfield, A., & Chavez, K. (2020). Getting In, Getting Hired, Getting Sideways Looks: Organizational Hierarchy and Perceptions of Racial Discrimination. *American Sociological Review*, 85(1), 31-57.
- Wyatt, M., & Silvester, J. (2015). Reflections on the labyrinth: Investigating black and minority ethnic leaders' career experiences. *Human Relations*, 68(8), 243–1269.
- Zhao, F.-F., Lei, X-L., He, W., Gu, Y.-H., & Li, D.-W. (2015). The study of perceived stress, coping strategy and self-efficacy of Chinese undergraduate nursing students in clinical practice. *International Journal of Nursing Practice*, 21, 401-409.
- Zikmund, W., Babin, B., Carr, J., & Griffin, M. (2013). *Business Research Methods* (9th ed.). Mason Ohio: South Western, Cengage Learning.

5. Appendices

Appendix 1: Analysis of various coping strategies used in literature

Appendix 2: Author guidelines of the journal

Appendix 3: Example of an article from the journal

Appendix 4: Interview schedule

Appendix 5: Plagiarism declaration form

Appendix 6: Copyright declaration

Appendix 7: Certification of Data Analysis Support form

Appendix 8: Ethical clearance letter

5.1 Appendix 1: Analysis of various coping strategies used in literature

| Author | Sample | Theory | Strategies to fit in | TBC | Proposed generic labels / categories of coping | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|--|--|---|---|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|---|
| | | | | | Proving them wrong - overcoming negative stereotypes - Rebranding | Tackling the issues head on | Making use of support network | Picking your battles | Faith: Prayer and spirituality | Sponsorship and mentorship | Selfcare: therapy and other forms (exercise) | Avoidance |
| Tomlison, et al (2013) | 68 black minority ethnic individuals (BME), including white women | Structural inequalities in legal profession - driscriminatory organisational strutures | Assimilation - individuals tending to confirm to the dominant white masculine culture - taking up hobbies and customs of dominant culture | Compromise - making sacrifices to satisfy work life balance (e.g. delaying pregnancy) | Playing the game - creating visibility and exceeding expectations, being involved in extramural activities includes turning gender or race into an advantage | Reforming - finding ways to change the system or status quo, creating network to drive diversity initiatives | | | | | | Relocation - finding a role that is more congruent with life stage - e.g. starting a family means less stressful role |
| Lewis, et al. (2013) | 17 Black African American female university students | Gendered microaggressions | | | Becoming a black super women taking on multiple roles and responsibilities to appear strong and resilient | Resistance coping using ones voice and power to change the system - speaking up to change the system | collective coping strategy to make use of network - | making cognitive decisions about the best way to deal with a gendered racial microaggression based on the context of the situation | | | | Protective coping - Becoming decensitised and escaping to save their energy for more important things |
| Shorter-Gooden (2004) | 196 African American women | Racial and gender discrimination | Role flexing - altering one's speech, behavior, dress, or presentation to fit in better with the dominant group and to diminish the impact of bias and negative stereotypes | | Maintaining a positive self image | Standing up and fighting back: challenge the source of bias or prejudice by fighting back | | | Resting on faith, prayer, and spiritual beliefs standing on shoulders - relying on ancestors / forebears, including making a difference for others | | Valuing oneself - involves beliefs and feelings that the woman has about commitment to engaging in behaviors that help her to develop or nurture herself. | Avoiding: avoiding contact with certain situations and people that would stir up biases and prejudices |
| Spates, et al. (2020) | 22 African American women (age 18-69) | Gendered racism | | | Redefining black womanhood - counter negative societal views Covert forms of resistance, standing out in a positive way, i.e. excelling | Overt forms of resistance - call it out, to get resolution | Expressing thoughts and feelings in safe spaces | | Relying on faith and prayer in pursuit of balance | | | |
| Holder, et al. (2015) | 10 African American female senior level professionals | Racial microaggression themes | Shifting - changing physical appearance, speech to counter image of negative stereotypes | | Armouring - pride in self, sense of internal excellence | | Support network - validate experiences, source of advice, provide advice on strategies | | Religion and spirituality provide sense of empowerment and protection | Having sponsors and mentors made them feel empowered, also getting coaching support from mentors | Seeking therapy as a last resort, engaging in physical exercise | |
| Sisco (2020) | 5 African American professionals, 15 interviews, 3 males and two females | Workplace incivility | Safeguard blackness - preserve perceptions of black people to | | Safeguard personal narratives - overcoming stereotyp threats that undermine respondents racial and professional identities Remaining resilient by Working harder than their White colleagues and maintaining a competitive mindset (vigorous work ethic) | | | | | Microtarget opportunities always seeking opportunities. Social networking - made use of powerful mentors and sponsors across racial lines | | |
| DeCuir-Gunby, et al. (2020) | 15 male and female respondents (10 female and 5 Male) at various levels | Critical Race theory | | | urgency in trying to be 'twice as good' or 'work twice as hard' as their White counterparts for fear of impending consequences | confronting racism through open communication | establishing personal and professional networks; support from other professionals in similar context | | | | engaging in self-care - reading self help material setting boundaries - separating work life from their home life to relieve themselves of the stress they experienced in the workplace. | avoiding addressing the racism she perceived in her workplace - fear of offending perpetrators |

5.2 Appendix 2: Author guidelines of the journal

Emerald insights Equity, Diversity and inclusion Journal Format

<https://www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/services/authors/author-how-guides/structure-your-journal-submission>

Article files should be provided in Microsoft Word format

While you are welcome to submit a PDF of the document alongside the Word file, PDFs alone are not acceptable. LaTeX files can also be used but only if an accompanying PDF document is provided. Acceptable figure file types are listed further below.

Article length / word count

Articles should be between **6000 and 8000 words** in length. This includes all text, for example, the structured abstract, references, all text in tables, and figures and appendices.

Please allow 280 words for each figure or table.

Article title

A concisely worded title should be provided.

Author details

The names of all contributing authors should be added to the ScholarOne submission; please list them in the order in which you'd like them to be published. Each contributing author will need their own ScholarOne author account, from which we will extract the following details:

Author email address.

Author name. We will reproduce it exactly, so any middle names and/or initials they want featured must be included.

Author affiliation. This should be where they were based when the research for the paper was conducted.

In multi-authored papers, it's important that ALL authors that have made a significant contribution to the paper are listed. Those who have provided support but have not contributed to the research should be featured in an acknowledgements section. You should never include people who have not contributed to the paper or who don't want to be associated with the research. Read about our research ethics for authorship.

Biographies and acknowledgements

If you want to include these items, save them in a separate Microsoft Word document and upload the file with your submission. Where they are included, a brief professional biography of not more than 100 words should be supplied for each named author.

Structured abstract

All submissions must include a structured abstract, following the format outlined below.

These four sub-headings and their accompanying explanations must always be included:

Purpose

Design/methodology/approach

Findings

Originality

The following three sub-headings are optional and can be included, if applicable:

Research limitations/implications

Practical implications

Social implications

You can find some useful tips in our write an article abstract how-to guide.

The maximum length of your abstract should be 250 words in total, including keywords and article classification (see the sections below).

Keywords

Your submission should include up to 12 appropriate and short keywords that capture the principal topics of the paper. Our Creating an SEO-friendly manuscript how to guide contains some practical guidance on choosing search-engine friendly keywords.

Please note, while we will always try to use the keywords you've suggested, the in-house editorial team may replace some of them with matching terms to ensure consistency across publications and improve your article's visibility.

Article classification

During the submission process, you will be asked to select a type for your paper; the options are listed below. If you don't see an exact match, please choose the best fit:

Original Article

Professional Insights

Research Notes

Book Reviews

You will also be asked to select a category for your paper. The options for this are listed below. If you don't see an exact match, please choose the best fit:

Research paper. Reports on any type of research undertaken by the author(s), including:

The construction or testing of a model or framework

Action research

Testing of data, market research or surveys

Empirical, scientific or clinical research

Papers with a practical focus

Viewpoint. Covers any paper where content is dependent on the author's opinion and interpretation. This includes journalistic and magazine-style pieces.

Technical paper. Describes and evaluates technical products, processes or services.

Conceptual paper. Focuses on developing hypotheses and is usually discursive. Covers philosophical discussions and comparative studies of other authors' work and thinking.

Case study. Describes actual interventions or experiences within organisations. It can be subjective and doesn't generally report on research. Also covers a description of a legal case or a hypothetical case study used as a teaching exercise.

Literature review. This category should only be used if the main purpose of the paper is to annotate and/or critique the literature in a particular field. It could be a selective bibliography providing advice on information sources, or the paper may aim to cover the main contributors to the development of a topic and explore their different views.

General review. Provides an overview or historical examination of some concept, technique or phenomenon. Papers are likely to be more descriptive or instructional ('how to' papers) than discursive.

Headings

Headings must be concise, with a clear indication of the required hierarchy.

The preferred format is for first level headings to be in bold, and subsequent sub-headings to be in medium italics.

Notes/endnotes

Notes or endnotes should only be used if absolutely necessary. They should be identified in the text by consecutive numbers enclosed in square brackets. These numbers should then be listed, and explained, at the end of the article.

Figures

All figures (charts, diagrams, line drawings, webpages/screenshots, and photographic images) should be submitted electronically. Both colour and black and white files are accepted.

There are a few other important points to note:

- All figures should be supplied at the highest resolution/quality possible with numbers and text clearly legible.
- Acceptable formats are .ai, .eps, .jpeg, .bmp, and .tif.
- Electronic figures created in other applications should be supplied in their original formats and should also be either copied and pasted into a blank MS Word document, or submitted as a PDF file.
- All figures should be numbered consecutively with Arabic numerals and have clear captions.
- All photographs should be numbered as Plate 1, 2, 3, etc. and have clear captions.

Tables

Tables should be typed and submitted in a separate file to the main body of the article. The position of each table should be clearly labelled in the main body of the article with corresponding labels clearly shown in the table file. Tables should be numbered consecutively in Roman numerals (e.g. I, II, etc.).

Give each table a brief title. Ensure that any superscripts or asterisks are shown next to the relevant items and have explanations displayed as footnotes to the table, figure or plate.

References

All references in your manuscript must be formatted using one of the recognised Harvard styles. You are welcome to use the Harvard style Emerald has adopted – we've provided a detailed guide below. Want to use a different Harvard style? That's fine, our typesetters will make any necessary changes to your manuscript if it is accepted. Please ensure you check all your citations for completeness, accuracy and consistency.

Emerald's Harvard referencing style

References to other publications in your text should be written as follows:

Single author: (Adams, 2006)

Two authors: (Adams and Brown, 2006)

Three or more authors: (Adams *et al.*, 2006) Please note, 'et al' should always be written in italics.

A few other style points. These apply to both the main body of text and your final list of references.

When referring to pages in a publication, use 'p.(page number)' for a single page or 'pp.(page numbers)' to indicate a page range.

Page numbers should always be written out in full, e.g. 175-179, not 175-9.

Where a colon or dash appears in the title of an article or book chapter, the letter that follows that colon or dash should always be lower case.

When citing a work with multiple editors, use the abbreviation 'Ed.s'.

At the end of your paper, please supply a reference list in alphabetical order using the style guidelines below. Where a DOI is available, this should be included at the end of the reference

5.3 Appendix 3: Example of an article from the journal

Institutional racism in the film industry: a multilevel perspective

Institutional racism in the film industry

Sophie Hennekam

ESC La Rochelle School of Business, La Rochelle, France, and

Jawad Syed

Suleman Dawood School of Business, Lahore University of Management Sciences, Lahore, Pakistan

551

Received 11 May 2017
Revised 3 August 2017
14 November 2017
Accepted 29 November 2017

Abstract

Purpose – While the notion of institutional racism typically focuses on racial discrimination in institutions such as governmental organisations, academic institutions and courts of law, there is a need to complement this organisational (meso) focus with the investigation of relevant factors at the societal (macro) and individual (micro) levels. The purpose of this paper is to examine the multilevel factors influencing institutional racism in the film industry.

Design/methodology/approach – Drawing on 16 in-depth interviews with individuals working in the film industry, this paper develops a conceptual perspective of multilevel racism.

Findings – The findings highlight how power structures, network-based recruitment practices, as well as formal and informal learning lead to and sustain racism in the film industry. However, agency on an individual level is observed as a way to break those patterns.

Originality/value – The findings highlight how individual agency pushes for more equality and diversity in the film industry, despite the barriers encountered on macro- and meso-levels. In addition, the important role of informal and formal learning through observation is stressed as a means to sustain the discriminatory practices in this industry.

Keywords Gender, Multilevel perspective, Racism, Film industry, Agency

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

Recent research has highlighted strong inequalities in the film industry (Jones and Pringle, 2015; Randle and Hardy, 2017; Wing-Fai *et al.*, 2015). The existence of racism in society and organisations alike cannot be denied and the film industry is no exception (Bhavnani, 2007). The film industry comprises the technological and commercial institutions of filmmaking, such as film production, screenwriting, acting, distribution; and actors, film directors and other film crew personnel. Focusing on the film industry, a recent study reveals that only 28.3 per cent of all speaking characters in films and TV series are from under-represented racial/ethnic groups (Smith *et al.*, 2016), which is about 10 per cent below the proportion in the US population (37.9 per cent) (USCB, 2015).

While studies on institutional racism have typically focused on racial discrimination in social institutions such as governmental organisations, schools, police and judiciary (e.g. Lopez, 2000), this organisational (meso) focus needs to be complemented with the study of relevant factors at the societal (macro) and individual (micro) levels in order to provide a more complete picture. This paper addresses this gap by developing a multilevel perspective of institutional racism in the film industry. By adopting a multilevel approach, we are able to shed light on how inequalities are produced and sustained thereby developing an integrated understanding of institutional racism (Nkomo, 1992; Phillips, 2011).

We make two inter-related contributions. First, we draw on multilevel insights to develop a holistic picture of institutional racism in the film industry. We argue that unless racism is understood and tackled at multiple levels in an integrated manner, instances and challenges of racial discrimination and under-representation are likely to persist. Second, our study is also a response to calls for more research on intersectionality (Chow *et al.*, 2013;



Hancock, 2016). We treat intersectionality as an important analytic tool to theorise issues of diversity and oppression (Nash, 2008), which are evident in the mutual reproduction of racial, gender and class relations (Acker, 2006). “Race” refers to socially defined differences based on physical characteristics, culture and historical domination and oppression, justified by entrenched beliefs (Acker, 2006, p. 444). We examine issues of intersectionality of race and gender facing women of colour in the film industry.

Multilevel perspective of institutional racism

Institutional racism refers to particular and general instances of racial discrimination, inequality and domination in organisational or institutional contexts, such as the labour market, industry or wider society (Ahmed, 2012; Carmichael and Hamilton, 1967). It may be observed in processes, attitudes and behaviours which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage ethnic minority people. White individuals are greatly over-represented in the film industry, disadvantaging non-white individuals (Quinn, 2011). There is also a phenomenon of whitewashing (Fox, 2013) – a casting practice in which white actors are cast in historically non-white character roles – which occurs in drama schools, casting offices and mainstream media.

We use Syed and Özbilgin’s (2009) relational framework of diversity to theorise institutional racism at multiple levels. Syed and Özbilgin (2009) argued that issues of diversity and discrimination need to be understood and addressed at the macro-societal level in terms of legislative and socio-cultural contexts, meso-organisational level in terms of organisational structures and routines and micro-individual level in terms of identity, intersectionality and agency.

We use the above framework to construct a holistic, multilevel perspective of institutional racism. While racism is often treated as an organisational phenomenon, we argue that academics and policymakers also needs to consider macro- and micro-level dimensions of racism.

Macro-level

The macro-level factors of racism are related to provisions for racial equality (or lack thereof) within national legislation, social customs and cultural traditions. For example, in the absence of legal provisions for racial equality and their active enforcement in education, employment and wider society, racial/ethnic minorities are likely to remain disadvantaged and discriminated against (Geddes, 2004), although discrimination and therefore disadvantages can also remain despite existing legislation, albeit in subtler ways (Bennington and Wein, 2000). Similarly, issues of social stereotyping and xenophobia are known for their adverse impact on racial minorities (Yakushko, 2009). In white majority societies, for example, whiteness may be seen as a marker that guarantees different levels of access in terms of economic, social and cultural capital (Garner, 2006). As a result, these factors serve to construct and sustain power hierarchies in organisations and societies.

Regarding the power structures, there is evidence that power in the film industry is unequally distributed such that few individuals, mainly white men, hold much of the decision-making power (Blair, 2003), giving way to personal biases and preferences. Such biases are also evident in acting schools and drama workshops. For example, Pagan (2015) explained how a superficial commitment to diversity and racially biased structures and attitudes characterise the Fine Arts degree programmes of a top school of dramatic arts in the USA. Amongst other things, Pagan noted, “the way in which these plays are selected, structured and presented reveals the systemic racism [...]” (para. 2), showing that progress is slow or inexistent.

Meso-level

At the meso-level, institutional racism operates through organisational structures, processes, norms and outcomes. These factors also affect the relationships among individuals working in an organisation or industry, which in turn lead to formal and informal hierarchies (Blair *et al.*, 2003). In this paper, we focus on network-based recruitment practices and formal and informal learning.

First, network-based recruitment practices are commonplace within the film industry and are central to initiating, developing and maintaining work as they provide exposure to people in positional power, increase market visibility and enable workers to leverage a place within the network of decision makers (Lee, 2011). Such networks or “cliques” (Manning and Sydow, 2007) are known for their potential to be both discriminatory and exclusionary in terms of race and gender (Grugulis and Stoyanova, 2012; Handy and Rowlands, 2014; Hennekam and Bennett, 2017), age (Hennekam, 2015) and disability (Randle and Hardy, 2017). Workers outside these networks and who lack the required social capital have difficulties obtaining work and advancing their careers (Antcliff *et al.*, 2007; Grugulis and Stoyanova, 2012).

Second, formal and informal learning constitutes a means through which newcomers learn the norms and rules of the industry. In line with social learning theory (Bandura, 1977a) that posits that behaviour is learned from the environment through the process of observational learning and socialisation, we argue that individuals learn the rules of the game in the film industry both during formal and informal learning opportunities. Informal learning opportunities are common in the film industry as most individuals start as “runner” which usually implies no pay but offers the opportunity to learn the ropes.

Micro-level

The micro-level consists of individual identities, interactions and strategies. First, intersectionality may influence the experiences of individuals. Intersectionality refers to overlapping or intersecting social identities and related systems of oppression, domination or discrimination (Crenshaw, 1991). Intersectionality is the idea that multiple identities such as race, gender and social class are not unitary or mutually exclusive entities, but reciprocally constructing phenomena (Collins, 2015). While the disadvantaged position of women in the film industry has been well documented (Conor *et al.*, 2015; Grugulis and Stoyanova, 2012; Handy and Rowlands, 2014; Wing-Fai *et al.*, 2015), less is known about women who simultaneously belong to an ethnic minority group. In the film industry, the literature suggests that women of colour remain more disadvantaged than their white cohorts (Brah and Phoenix, 2013). For example, in their recent analysis of women and power in film, Sutherland and Feltey (2017) showed that films depicting women’s empowerment are predominantly tales of white, middle class women. In contrast, women of colour are most likely to be featured in dominated and subordinate roles, such as maids and nurses.

Second, individuals can also express agency by going against prevailing practices. The expression of agency can be related to the notion of self-efficacy. Self-efficacy concerns the belief in one’s ability to complete a specific task or reach a goal successfully (Bandura, 1997b). The presence of role models in the form of successful females of ethnic minority origins in the film industry has a signalling function in that it shows that career success is possible, positively affecting their self-efficacy beliefs. Role models are described as “individuals whose behaviours, personal styles, and specific attributes are emulated by others” (Shapiro *et al.*, 1978, p. 52). Role models are important as they can provide a source of information, encouragement and support (BarNir *et al.*, 2011).

Methods

This study seeks to develop in-depth insights into institutional racism in the film industry using a multilevel framework that links the micro-, meso- and macro-level factors that shape

this phenomenon. Our approach followed the guidelines for qualitative methodology outlined by Miles and Huberman (1994) and Strauss and Corbin (1990), using an inductive interpretivist approach. We draw on 16 in-depth interviews with individuals working in the film industry in the Netherlands. Hereunder the characteristics of the sample, the followed procedures and the analysis are outlined.

Study's context

This study took place in the Netherlands. While this country is self-defined as a liberal and tolerant country, it has been argued that a backlash has occurred in public discourses about ethnic minorities both in organisations and in the society as a whole (Entzinger, 2014). In addition, ethnic minorities are often in a disadvantaged position which cannot be explained by low human capital attributes, meaning that there is institutional discrimination and racism (Vasta, 2007).

Sample

This study reports on 16 in-depth interviews with individuals in the film industry in the Netherlands. The interviews focused on different aspects of diversity and identity in the film industry. The interview guide included questions about the interviewees' career path, different activities, their identity and how they entered the film industry. Of the 16 interviewees, 9 were women and 7 were non-white individuals. Semi-structured in-depth interviews were chosen since they provide an opportunity for detailed investigation of personal views and experiences of each interviewee. All interviews were held in 2015 and lasted, on average, for about one to one-and-a-half hours. The demographic characteristics of the sample can be found in Table I.

Procedures

The interviewees were contacted by the researcher and an individual interview was scheduled. Interviewees were recruited through a combination of chain referral and convenience sampling techniques (Miles and Huberman, 1994). All interviews were conducted by Skype and were audio recorded. Anonymity was guaranteed and the interviewees were told they could stop the interview at any time. The interviews were conducted in Dutch and lasted for about one-and-a-half hour. The number of interviews was

| Arts practice | Gender | Race/ethnicity | Age |
|--------------------------------|--------|----------------|-----|
| Actress | Female | Creole | 29 |
| Producer | Female | White | 29 |
| Script writer/producer | Female | Asian | 39 |
| Actress/producer/writer | Female | Asian | 38 |
| Producer | Female | White | 30 |
| Actress | Female | White | 29 |
| Actress | Female | Creole | 36 |
| Actress/script writer/producer | Female | Black | 36 |
| Actress | Female | White | 27 |
| Actress | Female | White | 29 |
| Producer/playwright | Male | White | 43 |
| Writer | Male | White | 41 |
| Agent | Male | Black | 38 |
| Art director | Male | Asian | 45 |
| Assistant producer | Female | White | 26 |
| Make-up artist | Male | White | 33 |

Table I.
Demographic characteristics of sample

not determined beforehand, however, we stopped conducting more interviews when saturation point was reached. An interview guide was used (see the Appendix), but in line with the semi-structured design, the researcher was open to discuss other issues brought up by the interviewees. As a consequence, the interview guide was dynamic and evolved as more interviews were conducted.

We acknowledge that studies on sensitive topics that employ qualitative interviews may elicit socially desirable responses from the interviewees. We adopted four conscious strategies from the research design to the data collection to minimise social desirability bias. Ananthram and Chan (2016) recommended a multi-strategy approach that has been reported to be most effective. We first ensured that interviewees voluntarily participated in the study. This was clearly communicated at the outset and allowed interviewees to be comfortable with the interview process as well as the data analysis and reporting processes. Second, we assured interviewees anonymity at every stage of the research to minimise pressure to respond in a socially desirable manner. Our third strategy included conducting one-on-one interviews in familiar and comfortable surroundings. Moreover, the interviews were conducted at a time convenient to the interviewee to maximise their comfort level. As part of our final strategy, it was explained to the interviewees that there were no right or wrong answers, thereby encouraging them to elaborate on the responses using anecdotal evidence.

Analysis

The interviews were audio recorded and fully transcribed. The analysis was conducted in three inter-related steps based on the Gioia method (Gioia *et al.*, 2013). This is displayed in Figure 1.

It is important to mention that the analysis was iterative in nature and that we had to go back and forth between the transcriptions, coding book and additional observational notes that were taken right after each interview was conducted in order not to lose sight of the context in which things were said.

The analysis evolved from the first-order themes to broader categories and dimensions in the last and third step. During the first step of the analysis, the researcher read the entire transcripts to get a feel for the data. Then, one researcher started the coding process by using an initial list of codes based on the literature. Although some codes were based on the literature, such as the importance of intersectionality and network-based recruitment practices, others emerged organically from the data, such as formal and informal learning. There was mindful openness to new themes not previously identified in the literature (Locke, 2001). The codebook was constantly modified by adding new codes, creating sub-codes or merging some codes, as the existing codes were tested against each new transcript. Figure 1 shows the data analysis structure. The first-order themes can be found on the left in Figure 1.

In the second step of the analysis and after the coding on the data, the researcher focused on the connections between the codes and the identification of second-order conceptual codes. There was a deliberate departure from the rather descriptive formulation of first-order codes, where the words of the interviewees themselves were used, to a higher level of abstraction where meaningful themes were created based on the first-order themes (Locke, 2001; Strauss and Corbin, 1990). These themes can be found in the middle in Figure 1. The main themes that were identified in the data were “power structures,” “network-based recruitment practices,” “formal and informal learning,” “intersectionality of gender and race/ethnicity” and “agency”. At this stage, we regrouped the different themes under the different levels: micro (intersectionality and agency), meso (network-based recruitment practices and formal and informal learning) and macro (power structures). In addition, connections between the different themes and concepts that were conceptually

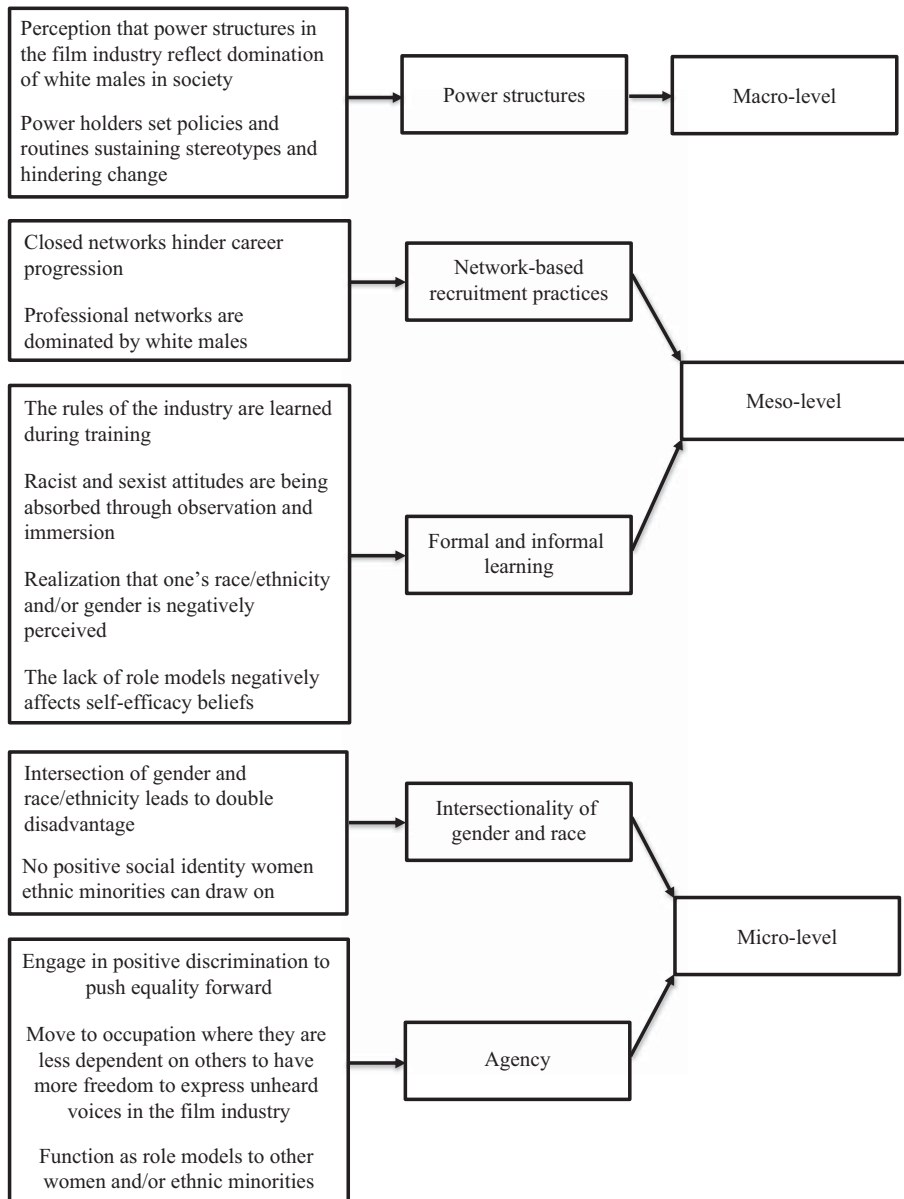


Figure 1.
Data analysis
structure

meaningful were explored in order to provide a conceptual perspective of institutional racism in the film industry. The different themes were perceived to be inter-related such as the reflection of power structures in both the society as a whole (macro-level) and within the film industry (meso-level).

In the third and final step of the analysis, the literature was consulted to examine the conceptualisation related to previous research and read more about themes that had emerged from the data in order to determine whether any key constructs were missed.

For example, the importance of formal and informal learning was something we had not anticipated and it was necessary to become familiar with this body of literature in order to be able to put the findings in perspective.

Findings

The analysis of interviews and personal stories reveals a range of aspects that contribute to and sustain a process of institutional racism. The different macro-, meso- and micro- factors as part of the multilevel perspective are used to provide explanations for the findings obtained. The key themes that emerged from our analyses are depicted in Table II and the resulting conceptual perspective is presented in Figure 2.

The findings are discussed in more detail below. Quotes are provided to illustrate our main points.

Macro-level: power structures

On macro-level, the interviewees stressed that the inequalities they experienced were strongly embedded in the power structures they observed in society as a whole, as a young assistant producer explains:

What do you want me to do about it? It's the same everywhere, in other organisations, in schools, in the government, in society. It just reflects what we see everywhere around us: that some people dominate others and that those people are in positions of power (Female, 26 years, assistant producer, white).

| Theme | Level/s | Description |
|--|----------------|---|
| Power structures | Macro and meso | Domination by males and white individuals as power holders and decision makers |
| Network-based recruitment practices | Meso | Closed networks dominated by white males, resulting in on-going stereotypes and hindering equality and diversity |
| Formal and informal learning | Meso | Individuals learn the “rules” and “norms” of the industry during their training and through observation |
| Intersectionality of gender and race/ethnicity | Micro | Non-white females are in a particular precarious situation because of intersectionality of their race and gender |
| Agency | Micro | Express of agency to push equality forward by moving to positions where they are no longer dependent on others, function as role models and engage in positive discrimination whenever possible |

Table II. Multilevel themes of institutional racism in the film industry

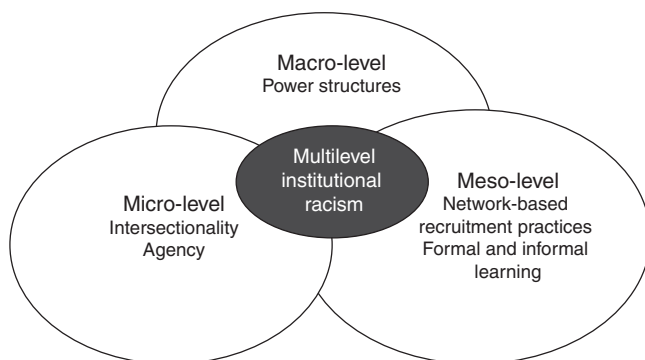


Figure 2. Conceptual model based on the findings

As the power holders in the industry are white males, these are also the ones who set policies and routines. The agent below has some decision-making power but as those decisions can be overruled by others with more power, he feels it is difficult to make any progress:

It isn't easy to challenge the status quo as I'm not the one who takes decisions. Only the ones who are in such positions can implement the changes needed to improve the under-representation of ethnic minorities in film (Male, 38 years, agent, non-white).

This was considered problematic as this often reinforces stereotypes that prevail in wider society. Non-white individuals, females in particular, explained that they were often recruited and depicted in a stereotypical way, thereby reinforcing social stereotypes. Often they were depicted in a submissive, sexual or caring role and black people as sportive for men and inferior for women, as the following non-white actress explains:

I always get offered the same kind of role: nurse, maid [...] This is confirming the existing stereotypes and preconceived ideas. It puts me in this outdated stigmatised identity. I feel this is important, as we are also full persons, with our own character with a complex identity. It's always the same angle that is taken, reducing us to the stereotype we represent. If we want social progress, this needs to be tackled (Female, 29 years, actress, non-white).

Meso-level: network-based recruitment practices

At the meso-level, the study indicates how opportunities for employment are shaped by the interviewees' micro-individual identity (race and its intersection with gender) and social networks. The interviewees refer to hiring and promotion practices where "who you know" and "who you are" seem to be more important than "what you can". They suggest that the existing networks are closed to people of colour and women and that it hinders their career progression:

Discrimination is part of the culture of the film- and theatre industry. It's ingrained somehow, it's because there is this existing network and people are systematically excluded (Female, 39 years, script writer/producer, non-white).

Roles are fulfilled based on a network of friends who have known each other for a long time. It's impossible to get a foot in the door if you're not "one of them". I don't know if this is because I'm a woman and the main power-holders are men or because I'm not white. Maybe a combination of both (Female, 36 years, actress, non-white).

Meso-level: formal and informal learning

In terms of racial gaps in the film industry, the study points towards where it all starts: during one's training. Interviewees explained that they learned the "rules of the industry" during their training. Bandura (1977a) suggested that behaviour is learned from the environment through a process of observational learning and socialisation. People observe the behaviour of others in given situations and note the outcomes of these behaviours. During training, new actors absorb stereotypical behaviours as well as racist and/or sexist attitudes from others. The following art director explains how he thinks that people probably do not even notice how they get used to racist comments:

You learn the rules of the game well before you get into the real world of the film industry. You somehow get used to comments that are actually quite racist. As it's a gradual process you probably do not even notice unless it affects you directly (Male, 45 years, art director, non-white).

The interviewees explained that people were treated differently during their training, based on race and gender. Moreover, they reported incidents where people who made their racial identity too salient were "punished":

I remember a teacher who said something like: "don't be too Creole in the way you move. Try to minimise it, we don't want people to be different" to someone from the Dutch Caribbean. I found it so insulting (Female, 29 years, actress, white).

The participants then use this knowledge to shape their own behaviour in similar contexts and expect to obtain similar outcomes. This reflects social learning that occurs within a context in which people learn from one another and, as such, is a cognitive process in which people make sense of what they observe. This also leads some individuals to hide or reduce their stigmatised identity, such as the following African actress:

I quickly understood what it takes to be successful. You should be male and white, pretty and social. You need to be affluent and have the right connections. I'm now downplaying my African origin, as it seems that this can only work to my disadvantage (Female, 36 years, actress/script writer/producer, non-white).

The absence of role models emerged as an indicator that breaking into and moving on in the film industry was not without barriers. In addition, it made them wonder whether they could be successful as there seemed to be so few successful examples:

How many black women actresses are there? Very very few. The day I realised that it was kind of discouraging. Why would I succeed if others before me didn't? (Female, 29 years, actress, non-white).

Micro-level: intersectionality

The study highlights the importance of the intersection of race and gender. It highlights unique experiences of racial minority women and shows that their experiences indeed differ from individuals with only one stigmatised identity. Racial minority women were aware of this particular situation, as the following extracts indicate:

I want to speak about the fact that I'm black and I'm a woman. While this seems unimportant to some, it does make a difference. Let me explain. We all want an identity that is valued and recognised by others. However, as a woman I'm in a disadvantaged position compared to men. Being black gives me a second disadvantage. In other words, while white women can stress their whiteness to bond with other white people and black men can stress their male-identity, I have no positive identity I can draw on (Female, 39 years, script writer/producer, non-white).

The lack of interesting roles for women in which we are depicted as respected and multifaceted individuals (not as nurses, mothers etc.) shows that the industry or maybe the society as a whole fails to recognise our stories (Female, 36 years, actress/script writer/producer, non-white).

Micro-level: agency

The data show that individuals express agency despite the perceived barriers of macro- and meso-levels. For example, they engage in positive discrimination whenever there is an opportunity to do so. However, it is important to note that they do not consider this to be desirable, but rather see it as a necessity or a "first step" that could lead to more equality in the long run:

As a white playwright, I noticed that there are very few plays written that involve black people. I'm now deliberately writing plays that involve people of colour, because if I don't do it they won't have work and this under-representation will continue (Male, 43 years, playwright, white).

In addition, they mentioned that they could only act on their personal level, which is what they did. This was mentioned by four interviewees:

We cannot change what others are doing, so the only thing you can accomplish is on your own, personal level. What I'm trying to do is to challenge the stereotypes in my writing. I think that continuous exposure to other ideas will help people change their mind and finally the general mentality and stereotypes people have (Female, 39 years, script writer/producer, non-white).

Some of these women moved to an occupation where they were less dependent on others. Especially a shift from acting to writing/producing emerged from the data. Three interviewees

explained that this gave them more freedom to express the voices of under-represented groups in the industry:

I started as an actress, but there are very few roles for non-white women. I felt I couldn't show my capabilities and develop my career. However, what made me switch to writing after all those years was the urge to tell my story, my shared story about how it is to be a non-white female actress. Instead of feeling frustrated, I now feel I'm making a contribution (Female, 38 years, actress/producer/writer, non-white).

Finally, four interviewees adopt a long-term perspective and highlight that they want to function as role models for future generations as they feel the road to equality in the film industry will be a long one:

It's important to me to be seen, to be present. For me, being visible is a way of showing that women of colour exist. By getting as much exposure as possible, no matter what role, I hope to encourage young women of colour to pursue a career in theatre, TV or film (Female, 36 years, actress, non-white).

Discussion

Drawing on in-depth interviews with individuals working in the film industry, we enhance our understanding of the multilevel nature of institutional racism in the film industry.

At the macro-level, the existing power holders in decision-making positions were perceived to maintain or even reinforce stereotypes by placing individuals in roles that would confirm the stereotypes about them. They explained that they were often chosen for a role to fulfil a token strategy, instead of being chosen for their skills.

At the meso-level, the findings showed that the process starts during the period in which individuals are trained for the film industry. At this early stage, individuals learn the "rules" of the industry through social learning and observation (Bandura, 1977a). By observing others, they learn what behaviour is considered appropriate. They quickly realise that not everyone is equal in the film industry and that being "different" from the mainstream is an obstacle for their career advancement. Moreover, the absence of role models in the form of successful ethnic minority women signals that non-white women might be unwelcome in the film industry or are less likely to succeed (Buunk *et al.*, 2007). Once being active in the industry and trying to establish oneself, the interviewees mentioned the white-male dominated networks that were difficult to break into, hindering their opportunities to show what they were worth.

At the micro-level, the study highlighted how ethnic minority women's experiences were unique as they faced multiple disadvantages due to stigmatisation and stereotyping of their race and gender. However, the study also highlighted how some of these women (and also men) used their individual agency and resilience to address such challenges. The above-mentioned factors hindered the progression of non-white individuals. As a consequence of those power structures, they stressed the need for positive action in order to initiate a meaningful change in the industry. While they are waiting for this to happen, a natural selection is taking place in which some individuals with a multiple disadvantage may be moving to occupations where they are less dependent on others and thus have the freedom and space to tell their stories. Individuals who have to deal with the intersection of several stigmatised social identities are an overlooked group and encounter multiple disadvantages. They explained being unable to draw on a socially validated or privileged identity and faced challenges of intersectionality and adverse stereotypes. Finally, they highlighted the importance of becoming a role model themselves to show what is possible for future generations.

Theoretical implications

This paper has developed and used a multilevel perspective on institutional racism. It has highlighted the need to depart from single-level conceptualisations—which limit racism to

institutional and organisational rules, norms and biases alone—to an integrated, holistic understanding of racism at three interconnected and overlapping levels. In particular, it has highlighted the need to consider how power hierarchies and differences at the macro-societal level overlap with racial and gender hierarchies and differences at the meso-organisational level which are evident in the shape of network-based staffing as well as opportunities for formal and informal learning. At the micro-level, it has highlighted the need to consider intersections of race with gender and also individual strategies used in response to racial and gender hierarchies and discrimination.

For the sake of comparison and evaluation, future scholars may examine institutional racism at multiple levels in the film industry in other countries such as the USA, UK, Canada and Australia as well as in other creative industries such as television and theatres. Scholars may also look at other dimensions of the multilevel framework such as laws and ethnic or social norms, and diversity agendas and policies of organisations, and how they affect racism and sexism in the film and other industries.

Practical implications

The findings have some important practical implications. First of all, change is clearly needed. However, organisational change may also inherently disrupt the culture, common practices and ways of working of an institution (Blitz and Kohl, 2012). Still, the call for change in the way the film industry operates is getting louder and the existing power holders probably have to engage in a debate that will imply some meaningful changes. It has been argued that open two-way communication is critical in such a process in that individuals feel valued and heard (Devine, 2010). One possibility is to use racial affinity groups. Racial affinity groups are processes where people of the same racial group meet on a regular basis to discuss the dynamics of institutional racism, oppression and privilege within their institution (Blitz and Kohl, 2012). Such groups can provide forums for communication and group members can offer insights to help move the changes forward.

Second and related to the formal and informal training, the study points towards the need to design and implement training programmes—for actors, directors, producers, writers and technical and auxiliary personnel—in a manner that is not only inclusive in terms of race and ethnicity but also in terms of gender and other forms of identity. This could be enacted through monitoring enrolments as well as positive action to attract members of the under-represented groups with an attention to their internal heterogeneity. Established academies as well as government organisations may offer scholarships and other incentives to eligible and deserving members of black, Asian and Hispanic communities including women to bridge the current racial and gender gaps in this profession.

The Scandinavian model of increasing diversity through affirmative action (Seierstad and Opsahl, 2011) may be seen as a way forward. If the aim is to correct an injustice of the past and to put an end to perpetual whiteness, this seems to be a reasonable solution. Change in the film sector towards greater equality, diversity and inclusion, as Tatli and Özbilgin (2012) argued, requires increasing the class, gender and racial diversity of the leadership as well raising existing leaders' awareness of systematic bias in this sector.

Finally, role models could provide women from ethnic minorities with the support and encouragement they need to initiate and sustain their career in the film industry (BarNir *et al.*, 2011). Previous research has shown that women are more inspired by other women as they can more easily relate to them (Hennekam, 2016). In addition, role models need to be perceived as similar (Sealy and Singh, 2010) as well as realistic and attainable (Lockwood and Kunda, 1997). As a consequence, more visible women of colour in the film industry could help to increase equality, diversity and inclusion in the film industry.

Limitations and suggestions for future research

While this study provided some insights into the process of institutional racism in the film industry, it is not without shortcomings.

First, the starting point of intersectional research has been the recognition that gender intersects with other social identities (Crenshaw, 1991) and we chose to focus on race. We agree with Jones (2009) that intersectionality is a useful heuristic for illuminating the complexities of the lived experience and for exploring the relationships between identity categories, individual differences, social structures and systems of inequality. However, in line with Warner and Shields (2013), we argue that intersectionality applies to all identities. Indeed, the study showed that the intersection with other dimensions such as sexual orientation also revealed interesting findings. While this was considered to be beyond the scope of this paper, we strongly recommend future studies to study the intersectionality of other diversity dimensions especially under-studied ones such as disability (Randle and Hardy, 2017).

Second, we cannot exclude that national or industry culture may have influenced the findings. We suggest that future studies take the national, regional and/or industry variances into account.

References

- Acker, J. (2006), "Inequality regimes: gender, class and race in organizations", *Gender and Society*, Vol. 20 No. 4, pp. 441-464.
- Ahmed, S. (2012), *On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life*, Duke University Press, Durham, NC.
- Ananthram, S. and Chan, C.C.A. (2016), "Religiosity, spirituality and ethical decision-making: perspectives from executives in Indian multinational enterprises", *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*, Vol. 33 No. 3, pp. 843-880.
- Antcliff, V., Saundry, R. and Stuart, M. (2007), "Networks and social capital in the UK television industry: the weakness of weak ties", *Human Relations*, Vol. 60 No. 2, pp. 371-393.
- Bandura, A. (1977a), *Social Learning Theory*, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ.
- Bandura, A. (1997b), *Self-Efficacy: The Exercise of Control*, Freeman and Company, New York, NY.
- BarNir, A., Watson, W.E. and Hutchins, H.M. (2011), "Mediation and moderated mediation in the relationship among role models, self-efficacy, entrepreneurial career intention, and gender", *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, Vol. 41 No. 2, pp. 270-297.
- Bennington, L. and Wein, R. (2000), "Anti-discrimination legislation in Australia: fair, effective, efficient or irrelevant?", *International Journal of Manpower*, Vol. 21 No. 1, pp. 21-33.
- Bhavnani, R. (2007), *Barriers to Diversity in Film: A Research Review*, UKFC, London.
- Blair, H. (2003), "Winning and losing in flexible labour markets: the formation and operation of networks of interdependence in the UK film industry", *Sociology*, Vol. 37 No. 4, pp. 677-694.
- Blair, H., Culkin, N. and Randle, K. (2003), "From London to Los Angeles: a comparison of local labour market processes in the US and UK film industries", *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, Vol. 14 No. 4, pp. 619-633.
- Blitz, L.V. and Kohl, B.G. (2012), "Addressing racism in the organization: the role of white racial affinity groups in creating change", *Administration in Social Work*, Vol. 36 No. 5, pp. 479-498.
- Brah, A. and Phoenix, A. (2013), "Ain't I a woman? Revisiting intersectionality", *Journal of International Women's Studies*, Vol. 5 No. 3, pp. 75-86.
- Buunk, A.P., Peiro, J.M. and Griffioen, C. (2007), "A positive role model may stimulate career-oriented behavior", *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, Vol. 37 No. 7, pp. 1489-1500.
- Carmichael, S. and Hamilton, C.V. (1967), *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation in America*, Vintage, New York, NY.

- Chow, S., Crenshaw, K.W. and McCall, L. (2013), "Toward a field of intersectionality studies: theory, applications, and praxis", *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, Vol. 38 No. 4, pp. 785-810.
- Collins, P.H. (2015), "Intersectionality's definitional dilemmas", *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol. 41, pp. 1-20.
- Conor, B., Gill, R. and Taylor, S. (2015), "Gender and creative labour", *The Sociological Review*, Vol. 63 No. S1, pp. 1-22.
- Crenshaw, K.W. (1991), "Mapping the margins: intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color", *Stanford Law Review*, Vol. 43 No. 6, pp. 1241-1299.
- Devine, M.C. (2010), "Participation in organizational change processes in human services organizations: the experiences of one group of frontline social workers", *Administration in Social Work*, Vol. 34 No. 2, pp. 114-134.
- Entzinger, H. (2014), "The rise and fall of multiculturalism: the case of the Netherlands", in Joppke, C. and Morawska, E. (Eds), *Toward Assimilation and Citizenship: Immigrants in Liberal Nation-States*, Palgrave Macmillan, London, pp. 59-86.
- Fox, J.E. (2013), "The uses of racism: whitewashing new Europeans in the UK", *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 36 No. 11, pp. 1871-1889.
- Garner, S. (2006), "The uses of whiteness: what sociologists working on Europe can draw from US research on whiteness", *Sociology*, Vol. 40 No. 2, pp. 257-275.
- Geddes, A. (2004), "Britain, France, and EU anti-discrimination policy: the emergence of an EU policy paradigm", *West European Politics*, Vol. 27 No. 2, pp. 334-353.
- Gioia, D.A., Corley, K.G. and Hamilton, A.L. (2013), "Seeking qualitative rigor in inductive research notes on the Gioia methodology", *Organizational Research Methods*, Vol. 16 No. 1, pp. 15-31.
- Grugulis, I. and Stoyanova, D. (2012), "Social capital and networks in film and TV: jobs for the boys?", *Organization Studies*, Vol. 33 No. 10, pp. 1311-1331.
- Hancock, A.M. (2016), *Intersectionality: An Intellectual History*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Handy, J. and Rowlands, L. (2014), "Gendered inequality regimes and female labour market disadvantage within the New Zealand film industry", *Women's Studies Journal*, Vol. 28 No. 2, pp. 24-38.
- Hennekam, S. (2015), "Challenges of older self-employed workers in creative industries: the case of the Netherlands", *Management Decision*, Vol. 53 No. 4, pp. 876-891.
- Hennekam, S. (2016), "Identity transition during pregnancy: the importance of role models", *Human Relations*, Vol. 69 No. 9, pp. 1765-1790.
- Hennekam, S. and Bennett, D. (2017), "Sexual harassment in the creative industries: tolerance, culture and the need for change", *Gender, Work & Organization*, Vol. 24 No. 4, pp. 417-434.
- Jones, D. and Pringle, J.K. (2015), "Unmanageable inequalities: sexism in the film industry", *The Sociological Review*, Vol. 63 No. 1, pp. 37-49.
- Jones, S.R. (2009), "Constructing identities at the intersections: an autoethnographic exploration of multiple dimensions of identity", *Journal of College Student Development*, Vol. 50 No. 3, pp. 287-304.
- Lee, D.J. (2011), "Networks, cultural capital and creative labour in the British independent television industry", *Media, Culture & Society*, Vol. 33 No. 4, pp. 549-565.
- Locke, K.D. (2001), *Grounded Theory in Management Research*, Sage, London.
- Lockwood, P. and Kunda, Z. (1997), "Superstars and me: predicting the impact of role models on self", *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 73 No. 1, pp. 91-103.
- Lopez, I.F.H. (2000), "Institutional racism: judicial conduct and a new theory of racial discrimination", *Yale Law Journal*, Vol. 109 No. 8, pp. 1717-1884.

- Manning, S. and Sydow, J. (2007), "Transforming creative potential in project networks: how TV movies are produced under network-based control", *Critical Sociology*, Vol. 33 Nos 1/2, pp. 19-42.
- Miles, M.B. and Huberman, A.M. (1994), *Qualitative Data Analysis*, Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Nash, J.C. (2008), "Re-thinking intersectionality", *Feminist Review*, Vol. 89 No. 1, pp. 1-15.
- Nkomo, S.M. (1992), "The emperor has no clothes: rewriting 'race in organizations'", *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 17 No. 3, pp. 487-513.
- Pagan, C. (2015), "Token diversity perpetuates racist casting at USC's School of Dramatic Arts", *Medium*, 24 August, available at: <https://medium.com/neon-tommy/token-diversity-perpetuates-racist-casting-at-usc-s-school-of-dramatic-arts-e327ac9b5a78>
- Phillips, C. (2011), "Institutional racism and ethnic inequalities: an expanded multilevel framework", *Journal of Social Policy*, Vol. 40 No. 1, pp. 173-192.
- Quinn, E. (2011), "Sincere fictions: the production cultures of whiteness in late 1960s Hollywood", *The Velvet Light Trap*, Vol. 67, pp. 3-13.
- Randle, K. and Hardy, K. (2017), "Macho, mobile and resilient? How workers with impairments are doubly disabled in project-based film and television work", *Work, Employment and Society*, Vol. 31 No. 3, pp. 447-464.
- Sealy, R.H. and Singh, V. (2010), "The importance of role models and demographic context for senior women's work identity development", *International Journal of Management Reviews*, Vol. 12 No. 3, pp. 284-300.
- Seierstad, C. and Opsahl, T. (2011), "For the few not the many? The effects of affirmative action on presence, prominence, and social capital of women directors in Norway", *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, Vol. 27 No. 1, pp. 44-54.
- Shapiro, E.C., Haseltine, F.P. and Rowe, M.P. (1978), "Moving up: role models, mentors, and the patron system", *Sloan Management Review*, Vol. 19 No. 3, pp. 51-58.
- Smith, S.L., Choueiti, M. and Pieper, K. (2016), "Comprehensive Annenberg report on diversity in entertainment", USC Annenberg, available at: <http://annenberg.usc.edu/pages/~media/MDSCI/CARDReport%20FINAL%2022216.ashx> (accessed 5 May 2017).
- Strauss, A. and Corbin, J. (1990), *Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques*, Sage Publications, Newbury Park, CA.
- Sutherland, J.A. and Feltey, K.M. (2017), "Here's looking at her: an intersectional analysis of women, power and feminism in film", *Journal of Gender Studies*, Vol. 26 No. 6, pp. 618-631.
- Syed, J. and Özbilgin, M. (2009), "A relational framework for international transfer of diversity management practices", *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, Vol. 20 No. 12, pp. 2435-2453.
- Tatli, A. and Özbilgin, M. (2012), "Surprising intersectionalities of inequality and privilege: the case of the arts and cultural sector", *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal*, Vol. 31 No. 3, pp. 249-265.
- USCB (2015), "US Census Bureau data", 25 June, available at: www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2015/cb15-113.html (accessed 20 April 2017).
- Vasta, E. (2007), "From ethnic minorities to ethnic majority policy: multiculturalism and the shift to assimilationism in the Netherlands", *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 30 No. 5, pp. 713-740.
- Warner, L.R. and Shields, S.A. (2013), "The intersections of sexuality, gender, and race: identity research at the crossroads", *Sex Roles*, Vol. 68 Nos 11/12, pp. 803-810.
- Wing-Fai, L., Gill, R. and Randle, K. (2015), "Getting in, getting on, getting out? Women as career scramblers in the UK film and television industries", *The Sociological Review*, Vol. 63 No. 1, pp. 50-65.
- Yakushko, O. (2009), "Xenophobia: understanding the roots and consequences of negative attitudes toward immigrants", *The Counseling Psychologist*, Vol. 37 No. 1, pp. 36-66.

Appendix. Interview guide

- (1) Could you please tell me what kind of work you do in the film industry?
- (2) Could you please tell me about how you got into the film industry?
- (3) How has your career evolved? How do you feel about that?
- (4) Could you describe the culture and ambiance of the film industry for me please?
- (5) How do people treat each other? What is important?
- (6) How do people get ahead?
- (7) How are you being perceived in the industry by others? Why is that?
- (8) Have you ever felt marginalised/discriminated against? If so, could you please explain this in detail?

Corresponding author

Sophie Hennekam can be contacted at: hennekams0@esc-larochelle.fr

5.4 Appendix 4: Interview schedule


| Research questions / objectives | Sections in literature review – (construct) | Interview questions |
|--|--|---|
| <p>Understanding the nature of the barriers faced by black professionals in senior and top management in South Africa's private sector?</p> | <p>Racial barriers: Structural Perceptual and section 2.1 (Chanland & Murphy, 2018)</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider your time spent operating at executive levels of organisations. What barriers you have experienced? 2. Describe a (recent) experience where you believe you were treated differently or discriminated against based on race. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Probe for subtle experiences, overt experiences 3. What do you think was the most significant race-based barrier you experienced? |
| <p>Coping strategies</p> <p>Understanding the coping strategies employed by successful black senior and top managers to overcome racially based barriers (Chanland & Murphy, 2018) within South Africa's private sector.</p> <p>Identifying differences and similarities in the coping strategies adopted by different genders among black senior and top managers to overcome racially based barriers</p> | <p>Coping strategies: section 2. 2 (Folkman & Moskowitz, 2004; Tomlinson, Muzio, Sommerlad, Webley, & Duff, 2013; Imoagene, 2019).</p> <p>Sec 2.1; 2.2: intersectionality theory (Sue, et al., 2007)</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. How did you deal with the race-based barriers? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. How do you think gender influences the strategy one choses? b. In your experience, do men and women employ similar or different strategies to deal with race-based discrimination? |
| <p>Understanding the role of self-efficacy theory help us understand the coping strategies adopted by black senior and top managers to overcome racially based barriers</p> | <p>Self-efficacy: sec 2.3 (Bandura, 1997; Lunenburg, 2011)</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Why did you not just give up in the face of the race-based discrimination? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Probe for personal traits |

5.5 Appendix 5: Plagiarism declaration form

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.

Matthew Mziwoxolo Mflathelwa

Signature: _____

5.6 Appendix 6: Copyright declaration

22.1 COPYRIGHT DECLARATION FORM

| Student details | | | |
|--|---|--|------------------------|
| Surname: | Mflathelwa | Initials: | M.M |
| Student number: | 19384999 | | |
| Email: | 19384999@mygibs.co.za / mflathmm@eskom.co.za | | |
| Phone: | 0729282000 | | |
| Qualification details | | | |
| Degree: | MBA | Year completed: | 2020 |
| Title of research: | GIBS | | |
| Supervisor: | Dr Dorothy Ndletyana | | |
| Supervisor email: | NdletyanaD@gibs.co.za | | |
| Access | | | |
| A. | My research is not confidential and may be made available in the GIBS Information Centre and on UPspace. | | |
| I give permission to display my email address on the UPspace website | | | |
| Yes | X | No | |
| B. | My research is confidential and may NOT be made available in the GIBS Information Centre nor on UPspace. | | |
| Please indicate embargo period requested | | | |
| Two years | | Please attach a letter of motivation to substantiate your request. Without a letter embargo will not be granted. | |
| Permanent | | Permission from the Vice-Principal: Research and Postgraduate Studies at UP is required for permanent embargo. Please attach a copy permission letter. Without a letter permanent embargo will not be granted. | |
| Copyright declaration | | | |
| I hereby declare that I have not used unethical research practices nor gained material dishonesty in this electronic version of my research submitted. Where appropriate, written permission statement(s) were obtained from the owner(s) of third-party copyrighted matter included in my research, allowing distribution as specified below. | | | |
| I hereby assign, transfer and make over to the University of Pretoria my rights of copyright in the submitted work to the extent that it has not already been affected in terms of the contract I entered into at registration. I understand that all rights with regard to the intellectual property of my research, vest in the University who has the right to reproduce, distribute and/or publish the work in any manner it may deem fit. | | | |
| Signature: |  | | Date: 27 November 2020 |
| Supervisor signature: | <i>Dorothy Ndletyana</i> | | Date: 30.11.20 |

5.7 Appendix 7: Certification of Data Analysis Support form

25. APPENDIX 6 CERTIFICATION OF ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

(Additional support retained or not - to be completed by all students)

Please note that failure to comply and report on this honestly will result in disciplinary action

I hereby certify that (please indicate which statement applies):

- *I DID NOT RECEIVE any additional/outside assistance (i.e. statistical, transcriptional, and/or editorial services) on my research report:*
.....

- *I RECEIVED additional/outside assistance (i.e. statistical, transcriptional, and/or editorial services) on my research report*
.....
Transcription services
.....

If any additional services were retained– please indicate below which:

- Statistician*
- Transcriber*
- Editor*
- Other (please specify:.....)*

Please provide the name(s) and contact details of all retained:

NAME: Nonkululeko Mflathewla

EMAIL ADDRESS: mflathelwan@gmail.com

CONTACT NUMBER: 0728802992

TYPE OF SERVICE: Transcription services

NAME:

EMAIL ADDRESS:

CONTACT NUMBER:

TYPE OF SERVICE:

NAME:

EMAIL ADDRESS:

CONTACT NUMBER:

TYPE OF SERVICE:

I hereby declare that all *statistical write-ups and thematic interpretations of the results* for my study were completed by myself without outside assistance

NAME OF STUDENT: Matthew Mziwoxolo Mflathelwa
.....

SIGNATURE: 
.....

STUDENT NUMBER:
 19384999
.....

STUDENT EMAIL ADDRESS:
 19384999@mygibs.co.za / mflathmm@eskom.co.za
.....

5.8 Appendix 8: Ethical clearance letter

**Gordon Institute
of Business Science**
University of Pretoria

Matthew Mflathelwa <19384999@mygibs.co.za>

Ethical Clearance Approved

1 message

MastersResearch2020 <MastersResearch2020@gibs.co.za>
To: "19384999@mygibs.co.za" <19384999@mygibs.co.za>

14 September 2020 at 10:27

**Gordon Institute
of Business Science**
University of Pretoria

**Ethical Clearance
Approved**

Dear Matthew Mflathelwa,

Please be advised that your application for Ethical Clearance has been approved.


You are therefore allowed to continue collecting your data.

We wish you everything of the best for the rest of the project.

[Ethical Clearance Form](#)

Kind Regards

This email has been sent from an unmonitored email account. If you have any comments or concerns, please contact the GIBS Research Admin team.

 **EthicalClearanceReport.pdf**
417K