



GORDON INSTITUTE
OF BUSINESS SCIENCE

University of Pretoria

**Challenges facing women in business - an assessment of women in the
South African petroleum industry**

Masego Sephoti

2853132

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

11 November 2009

ABSTRACT

This report focuses on barriers women face within the petroleum industry, with regard to career advancement to senior positions. This research was conducted to identify the challenges that hinder such progression for women, taking key issues and themes raised by women currently at management levels. The primary outcomes were identifying key barriers and/or challenges that exist in the petroleum industry, and juxtaposing them to barriers identified in other industries at both the local and global context.

This research demonstrated the fact that despite legislative intervention and initiatives by the South African petroleum industry to address gender inequality and employment equity within the workplace, women are yet to achieve a critical mass at senior positions within in the petroleum industry.

Barriers hindering women advancement to senior levels within the petroleum industry, *inter alia*, were found to be: women not being taken seriously; “Boys Club” syndrome; work life balance challenge; and perceptions and stigmas regarding women managers.

It is recommended that the petroleum industry adhere to career development plans for women; the individual oil companies identify additional mentorship opportunities and more prominent role models for young females joining the

industry; and lastly that industry captains actively encourage an environment where women are treated equal to their male counterparts.

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.

Masego Sephoti
11 November 2009

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to my supervisor, Aldrin “Buzz” Beyer for his guidance and continuous support especially during the period I hit a “brick wall” and had to change my research topic at the very last minute. Your advice was very much appreciated.

To my family, especially my husband, Tsile, and daughter, Masegoatsile, who have had to “weather the storm” of the MBA journey; your love and support will forever be cherished. To Masegoatsile, thank you for unknowingly being my pillar of strength.

My appreciation also goes out to my dear friends, Carva Pop and Nhlanhla Gumede, for their encouragement, unconditional support and being my voices of reason when all else failed to make sense. Thank you for believing in me and constantly pushing me to strive for greatness.

I would also like to express my gratitude to Dr. Arnold Beyleveld and Dipti Fernandes who willingly gave up their valuable time to assist me in this research.

To my boss, Heather Ralph, thank you for the incredible support and patience. You are a true inspiration for women in this industry.

To my colleagues, Althea Banda-Hansmann and Stephen Ramotsei, thank you for your guidance and enthusiasm to advice in this research as and when the opportunity presented itself.

Last, but not least, thank you to Leigh Mather for enthusiastically volunteering to assist with the research. All your efforts did not go unnoticed.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Background to the Study	1
1.2.1 Background to the Petroleum Industry	5
1.3 Research Motivation	8
1.3.1 Women and Business	8
1.3.2 South African Legislation	10
1.4 Research Problem	11
1.4.1 Research Questions	12
1.5 Research Scope	13
1.6 Objectives of the study	13
1.7 Constraints	14
1.7.1 Necessary Permission	14
1.7.2 Assumptions	14
1.8 Structure of the Report	14
1.9 Summary	15
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	16
2.1 Introduction	16
2.2 Women in Management	16
2.2.1 South African Women in Management	19
2.2.2 South African Women in the petroleum industry	22
2.3 Barriers to women in the petroleum industry	24
2.3.1 Professional Barriers	24
2.3.1.1 Advancement Opportunities	24
2.3.1.2 Mentoring Opportunities	25
2.3.1.3 Barriers to Networking for women	25

2.3.1.4	Training opportunities	27
2.3.1.5	The “Old Boys” Club mindset	28
2.3.2	Psychological Barriers	29
2.3.2.1	Work-Life Balance	29
2.3.2.2	Gender discrimination	29
2.3.2.3	Gender Stereotyping	29
2.4	Conclusion	30
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH QUESTIONS		31
3.1	Introduction	31
3.2	Research Question 1	31
3.3	Research Question 2	31
3.4	Research Question 3	31
3.5	Research Question 4	32
3.6	Research Question 5	32
3.7	Research Question 6	32
3.8	Research Question 7	32
CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY		33
4.1	Introduction	33
4.2	Research Methodology	33
4.3	The Population and Unit of Analysis	35
4.4	Research Instrument	36
4.5	Biographical information	37
4.6	Closed-ended questions	37
4.6.1	Open-ended questions	42
4.7	Data Collection and Sampling	42
4.8	Ethical Consideration	44
4.8.1	Informed Consent	44
4.8.2	Anonymity	44
4.8.3	Safe Guarding of Raw data	45

4.9 Coding and Analysis	45
5 CHAPTER 5: RESULTS	47
5.1 Biographical information of the respondents	47
5.1.1 Age	47
5.1.1.1 Summary of Age Demographic	48
5.1.2 Marital Status	48
5.1.2.1 Summary of Marital Status Findings	50
5.1.3 Race	51
5.1.3.1 Summary of Race Respondents	52
5.1.4 Child Care Responsibilities	53
5.1.4.1 Summary of Child Care responsibilities findings	54
5.1.5 Education	55
5.1.5.1 Highest Qualification	55
5.1.5.2 Summary of Findings	58
5.1.6 Number of years in management	59
5.1.6.1 Summary of findings	61
5.1.7 Number of years in the Petroleum Industry	62
5.1.8 Closed-ended Questions (Likert Scale): Section 2	63
5.1.8.1 Summary of Findings	64
6 CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS	72
6.1 Introduction	72
6.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE POPULATION	73
6.2.1 Age	73
6.2.2 Marital Status	73
6.2.3 Race	75
6.2.4 Highest level of qualification	76

6.2.5	Child caring responsibilities	77
6.2.6	Number of years in management	77
6.2.7	Summary of Findings on the respondent populations	78
6.3	Perception described by respondents	79
6.3.1	Career path and choice of industry	79
6.3.2	Perceived gender equality/discrimination and Employment equity within the petroleum industry	80
6.3.3	Ease of entry into management position for women	81
6.3.4	Lack of support for women	82
6.3.5	Lack of mentoring opportunities	82
6.3.6	Lack of training opportunities	83
6.3.7	Gender stereotyping	84
6.3.8	“Old boys club”	84
6.3.9	Fulfilment in current position	85
6.3.10	Pull her down (PHD) syndrome	85
6.3.11	Family/lifestyle implications for women advancement	86
6.4	Barriers to women in the petroleum industry	86
6.4.1	Professional Barriers	86
6.4.1.1	Advancement Opportunities	86
6.4.1.2	Mentoring Opportunities	87
6.4.1.3	Barriers to Networking for women	87
6.4.1.4	Training opportunities	89
6.4.1.5	The “Old Boys” Club mindset	90
6.4.2	Psychological Barriers	91
6.4.2.1	Work-Life Balance	91
6.4.2.2	Gender discrimination	92
6.4.2.3	Gender Stereotyping	92

6.4.2.4	CONCLUSION	94
	CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	95
7.1	Introduction	95
7.2	Meeting the research objectives of the study	95
7.3	Women and Business	97
7.4	Recommendations	98
7.5	Areas for further research	101
7.6	Concluding remarks	102
	REFERENCES	103
	APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MANAGERS	108

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Representation of men and women in South African companies from 1998 to 2000	21
Table 2: Representation of men and women in South African companies in 2004....	21
Table 3: Workforce Profile for the Petroleum Industry	23
Table 4: Age demographics.....	48
Table 5: Marital status	50
Table 6: Racial Representation.....	52
Table 7: Child Care responsibility	54
Table 8: Summary of Qualifications	58
Table 9: Years Experience.....	61
Table 10: Section 2 Analysis	64
Table 11: Respondents perceptions of the petroleum industry	65

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Age Demographic.....	47
Figure 2: Marital Status Demographics	49
Figure 3: Marital Statuses vs. Number of Years in Management.....	49
Figure 4: Age vs. Marital Status Chart.....	51
Figure 5: Race Demographic.....	52
Figure 6: Parental Status of women	53
Figure 7: Parental status and managerial levels for women managers	54
Figure 8: Qualification Levels	55
Figure 9: Breakdown of qualifications	56
Figure 10: Highest Qualifications vs. Number of years in management	57
Figure 11: Number of years in management	59
Figure 12: Number of years in management vs. Age.....	60
Figure 13: Number of years in management vs. Race.....	61
Figure 14: Number of years in industry.....	62
Figure 15: Number of years in Industry vs. Number of years in Management.....	63
Figure 16: Reason for career choice	67
Figure 17: Perceived Barriers.....	68
Figure 18: What the industry should do?	70

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

1.1 Introduction

This chapter serves to provide the reader with an introduction to the research report. The background and motivation to the research problem will be presented. A brief background to the South African petroleum industry is offered before the research motivation, problem and questions are discussed. The research scope is highlighted and the research objectives are defined before the constraints of the study are discussed. In conclusion, this chapter will provide a brief overview of the structure of the research report.

1.2 Background to the Study

Women advancement in business is a contentious topic world over. South African women, irrespective of race, have always come second in the society's strata (Gertzen, 2006). Previous policies and legislation of the country favoured men, in particular, white men (National Gender Policy Framework, 2003).

The socio-cultural position of all groups defined women to be inferior and as a result assigned them the position of minors in both the public and private sectors (National Gender Policy Framework, 2003). Despite the Employment Equity Act, Act No. 55 of 1998, it is only until recently that attention is paid to problems faced by women in the workplace.

According to Eade (2007) women have a tendency of positioning themselves as

supporters of male leaders, assuming roles that subordinate them as business people; suggests that women's strength lies in the "soft skills" which are helpful to these leaders, who receive the credit and promotions.

Eade (2007) highlights the fact that women in supportive roles often conceal the fact that a lot of men in key management roles lack emotional intelligence. Men believe that many women do this because they get a sense of comfort in staying where they are (Eade, 2007). Eade (2007) attributes this to women's need for family or balance-of-life issues. This is a notion that men generally do not subscribe to (Eade, 2007).

Women are no strangers to management and leadership still they experience frustration in reaching senior management positions and retaining those positions once achieved. Morrison (1992) illustrates the recognizable "glass ceiling" as an invisible obstacle that confines women to lower positions and excludes many women from opportunities to develop management skills. Burke, Koyuncu and Fiksenbaum (2008, p. 278) explain that the main impediment to women's career advancement lies in the "attitudes, biases and prejudices of their male colleagues and their organisational cultures".

According to Eade (2007, p. 1) women are hardly ever found in "stretch positions because management wants to shield them from failure". Yet women continue to leave the corporate world for two reasons: firstly, the inability to move up the corporate ladder; and secondly, the need for a balanced life due to

the extensive family responsibilities (Eade, 2007).

The early corporate departures by women result in hardly any women left at corporate levels as role models. According to Eade (2007, p. 1) many women “have difficulty asking for help” and delegation and “feel apologetic for taking time out of work for golf and other networking activities”. She further suggests that women “feel that their time is better spent at their desk rather than out” with business associates and have not quite grasped the importance of networking.

The Petroleum and Liquid Fuels Charter (herein after referred to as the “the Charter”) was signed by the South African Petroleum industry in 2000, making it the first industry to formally agree to a Charter. The Charter aims to ensure the sustainable presence, ownership and control by approximately 25% of historically disadvantaged South Africans across the industry value chain by 2010 (Petroleum Products Amendment Act, 2003). The main purpose of the Charter was to “*redress historical, social and economic inequalities as stated by the Constitution*” (Petroleum Products Amendment Act, 2003, p. 20) within the industry. Capacity building and employment equity comprised some of the elements the Charter sought to address.

The petroleum industry set its sights to prioritising the crucial need to correct the imbalances of the past, prior to the enactment of the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act of 2003 (Banda-Hansmann, 2008).

Women participation in management or senior positions within the South African petroleum industry is under-represented. The industry talks about the problem of demographics but tend to ask the majority (white, married males) how best to solve it (Sprunt, 2006). This, according to Sprunt (2006), presents further challenges of misinterpretation regarding what women needs are in terms of their career advancement.

Nevertheless, the Alaskan petroleum industry seems to have mastered the demographic transformation of the industry. In the Alaskan context, the oil industry is no longer just a man's world. Sherk (2004) explains that women are making a huge impact in the previously male-dominated industry, and are represented across the value chain from loading tankers to vice presidents and presidents.

In response to the Employment Equity Act of 1998, South African businesses have begun placing more focus on gender equality in the workplace. The South African Petroleum Industry Association (SAPIA) has recognised the need to “transform the industry in terms of skills development, capacity building and employment equity” through diversity (Banda-Hansmann, 2008).

Initiatives such as the Leadership in Oil and Energy (LOE) programme, was designed to rectify the scarcity of women at management levels within the Industry. The objective of the LOE programme is to facilitate women empowerment and assist the petroleum industry to progress leadership diversity

and capacity building (Banda-Hansmann, 2008). The LOE programme is supported by SAPIA member companies, namely: British Petroleum (BP) Southern Africa, Chevron South Africa, Engen Petroleum, PetroSA, Sasol Limited, Shell South Africa and Total South Africa (Banda-Hansmann, 2008).

From a South African context, women still continue to fill the lowest positions within organisations and find it difficult to climb to senior and executive management levels. Women are therefore not benefiting from the government policies and legislature to advance in their careers (Mathur-Helm, 2004).

Some effort is made by the petroleum industry to promote gender equality and employment equity at all levels. However, the question remains whether these initiatives are yielding desired results.

This research report assesses challenges facing women within the South African petroleum industry, focusing on issues that hinder women advancement into senior positions.

1.2.1 Background to the Petroleum Industry

The South African petroleum industry is comprised of seven major players, namely: British Petroleum (BP) Southern Africa, Chevron South Africa, Engen Petroleum, PetroSA, Sasol Limited, Shell South Africa and Total South Africa.

The history of South Africa's oil industry dates back to 1884 when the first oil

company was established in the Western Province, Cape Town, to import refined products. Over the years the industry has grown and matured. Today the country processes roughly 20 million tonnes of crude oil per annum and consumes 23 million tonnes of liquid fuel products of which 45% is gasoline and 26% diesel. The upstream (exploration and production part of the value chain) oil industry ceased to exist until the 1990s (MBendi, 2009).

According to the MBendi (2009), South Africa consumed an average of 549.23 thousand barrels per day (tbpd) of oil in 2007, 0.65% of the world total, compared to 12.31 tbpd in 2006 of. Because of South Africa's abundant supplies of cheap coal, liquid fuels only provide 21% of the energy requirements of the country.

For the same reason South African refineries have extensive upgrading capability in order to maximise the production of gasoline and diesel at the expense of fuel oil which is primarily used for bunkering. In addition, oil from coal synfuels plants/refineries provide a significant proportion of South Africa's liquid fuels. Synfuels refineries produce synthetic fuels and chemicals from low-grade coal as well as the conversion of natural gas to environment-friendly fuels and chemicals (MBendi, 2009). Synthetic fuels represent an alternative to fossil fuels, which are short in supply and also expensive (MBendi, 2009).

The major liquid fuel markets are in the inland Gauteng province of South Africa. Therefore companies with easy access to this region from their

manufacturing plants are at a strategic advantage. The South African petroleum industry is in the process of transformation from the industry that served the apartheid era of secrecy and boycotts to a model that reflect democratic and economic needs of South African economy (MBendi, 2009)

The South African petroleum industry, similar to other global oil companies, is characterised by male domination. The SAPIA board of governors is 100 % male represented. The local petroleum industry is comprised of only 76 women in what SAPIA has split into top management (4) and senior management (72) positions out of a total 3017 women employed within the industry (SAPIA Annual Report, 2008). Therefore, only 6% females hold top management levels in the petroleum industry. In addition, only 19% of the senior management positions are filled by women and 27% of specialist and mid-management positions are filled by women.

Some strides have been made in the endeavour to addressing male domination within the local petroleum industry. Forums such as Women in Oil and Women in Energy (WOESA) have come to the fore with the sole purpose of escalating women's concerns and to form support structures that will enable women to advance to higher positions within the industry (WOESA, 2005).

1.3 Research Motivation

1.3.1 Women and Business

China, the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States of America (USA) are some of the countries that have developed gender equality legislation (similar to that of South Africa). This section of the report will draw comparisons illustrating the challenges faced by women in the three countries, namely China, UK and USA. These countries have developed gender equality legislation. Similar gender equality legislations have been adopted in South Africa; however minimal results have been witnessed in the past ten years.

According to Mathur-Helm (2004) within the Fortune 500, which ranks America's largest corporation, only one in eight corporate officers are women and very few occupy positions of Chief Executive Officers, president and Chief Operating Officer. According to the latest Catalyst Report (2008) there has been very little change in this regard.

Wilson (2004) (cited in Mathur-Helm, 2004) says, women in the UK are subjected to inequality in the labour force and lag behind in terms of income parity compared to their male counterparts. In the UK, women form 75% of employees in the personal and protective services and sales. However only account for 24% of all management positions and only 9.9% of directorships.

Likewise in China, according to Fang (2004), cited in Mathur-Helm, equality remains a pipedream as women still face substantial challenges in climbing the

corporate ladder. Chinese women make up 47% of the labour force however only few partake in management positions. In addition, despite the fact that women find the right track to a management career in China, the rate at which they are promoted is less frequent compared to that of their male counterparts Mathur-Helm (2004)

Black women in the USA constitute the largest minority group. In addition career advancement of both black and white women in the USA companies is considerably different (Mathur-Helm, 2004). In the USA, hierarchy within management also consists of white men at senior positions, followed by white women, then by black women and lastly black men (Mathur-Helm, 2004).

This situation is very different in the South African context, as black males, dictated by history, have been the preferred appointments in the local labour market (Mathur-Helm, 2004). South African black males are better represented than black females in the workplace. To the degree that women continue to be discriminated against in the USA, the white women have more advantages compared to black women (Mathur-Helm, 2004). South African black women face greater hardship compared to their white USA female counterparts largely due to family traditions and lifestyles (Mathur-Helm, 2004).

According to the Commission on Gender Equality (1999), women represent the majority of the South African population however account for a third of the labour force, with few in senior and top management levels as gender equality

within the workplace is supported by job segregation and perceived responsibility associated with gender groups (Commission on Gender Equality, 1999).

Mathur-Helm (2004, p. 57) is of the view that the “social and cultural assumptions used as management strategies continuously create barriers to women’s employment, growth and development. As a result this creates obstacles in integrating women into the mainstream management” (Mathur-Helm, 2004). Mathur-Helm argues that women remain “under-utilised in the South African employment market and are a wasted resource” (2004, p. 57).

As can be seen from the short literature overview, gender inequality still prevails despite attempts by women to up their game in terms of career advancement. The global context is no different from the South African one as more and more women tend to be stereo-typed/boxed into certain types of occupations. A study of this nature becomes necessary to understand the challenges women are facing in business to truly assist them in advancing their careers.

1.3.2 South African Legislation

The South African government has made strides in terms of addressing inequality within the workplace. Nevertheless, the impact of the legislation is yet to be felt by many women. The Employment Equity Act (Act No. 55 of 1998) was implemented in 1999 and was intended to encourage more women participation in the workforce.

According to Mathur-Helm (2004) evidence of greater equity in the workplace suggests a successful outcome however women still hold fewer jobs and hardly any leadership positions in the corporate world. In addition, even fewer women hold top positions in the private sector. This, however, has taken a turn in the public sector where more women are being appointed at very senior positions in government. With 93 % of all top management positions in either public or corporate sectors, and chief executive positions, three in every four of all senior management positions are filled by men (Mathur-Helm, 2004).

1.4 Research Problem

Of the 3017 women employed in the petroleum industry only 76 are in senior management positions (Banda-Hansmann, 2008) and this is not sustainable if this industry truly wants to promote gender equality. Hence, the primary research question is the following: *Why are women in the petroleum industry still facing challenges to climb up the corporate ladder despite employment equity initiatives and legislation in place to rectify gender inequality.* In order to determine the success of the petroleum industry's endeavour to advancing women to senior positions, this question needs to be answered.

The problem under question is two fold: firstly identifies the challenges that affect the advancement of women within the petroleum industry. Secondly, this research undertakes a benchmark to review trends in other countries and industries.

1.4.1 Research Questions

The following are the key research questions:

- Are there barriers to entering management and/or senior positions, if so, what are they?
- What are the primary factors motivating women to consider advancing their careers in the petroleum industry?
- Are women who are currently in management positions satisfied with their career advancement?
- In hindsight, as a woman, was it a good idea to enter the petroleum industry?
- Given the male dominated nature of the petroleum industry – has the industry put adequate measures in place to address women advancement?
- Are there realistic career advancement options for women in the petroleum industry?
- What are the perceived career paths for young females entering the petroleum industry?

1.5 Research Scope

This study focused on the petroleum industry, in particular, women within the industry. The research scope was limited to exploring challenges women faced with regard to advancement to senior positions within the petroleum industry. The study investigated barriers women experience in terms of career advancement and how the South African petroleum industry compared to other industries at both the local and global context.

1.6 Objectives of the study

The aim of the research is both quantitative and qualitative to establish the extent to which women are able to advance their careers within the petroleum industry. The primary research objective was to analyse the finding of the key research questions (outlined in section 1.2.2.) in order to establish the petroleum industry's endeavour to advancing women to senior positions.

The secondary research objectives are:

- To investigate career opportunities for women in the petroleum industry.
- To determine career scope and typical career pathing in the petroleum industry for women.
- To identify and investigate barriers to senior positions for women within the petroleum industry.

1.7 Constraints

1.7.1 Necessary Permission

In order to gather data, permission was obtained to send data to individuals who had graduated on the LOE programme. The researcher obtained permission for four (4) of the seven (7) participating oil companies

1.7.2 Assumptions

The following assumptions were made for the application of the study that-

- Cooperation by individuals who graduated from the LOE programme;
- Sources of data and statistics were accurate; and
- Respondents to the questionnaire were honest.

1.8 Structure of the Report

In Chapter 1 briefly discussed the research problem through the research questions. The scope, research objectives and limitations of the study were also discussed.

Chapter 2 undertook a non-empirical investigation into the challenges women face in the endeavour to advancing their careers to more senior positions within the petroleum industry.

Chapter 3 introduced the two-pronged research questions alluded to above in

the endeavour to addressing the research at hand.

Chapter 4 explored viable alternatives and details preferred in the research methodology used to conduct the research. This chapter comprised research approach, philosophy and design.

Chapter 5 presented the sample and results of the research. This section comprised the findings; and provided a detailed assessment of the challenges identified through the questionnaires.

Chapter 6 provided an analysis of the data presented in Chapter 5 with reference to the non-empirical research covered in Chapter 4.

Chapter 7, the final part of the report, demonstrated recommendations and identifies potential areas for future research based on findings of the research required deeper analysis and additional research.

1.9 Summary

In this chapter a brief overview on literature was offered to define the context of this research study and to explain the research problem. The rationale of the study was discussed and the research aim and objectives were defined within the scope of the research. In the next chapter a detailed analysis of the literature is presented.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Within the context already provided, this section reviewed the existing literature based on the key aspects related to the research conducted. The following areas were investigated - women in management in general specifically to the petroleum industry, professional and psychological barriers related to the problem statement.

2.2 Women in Management

According to a study by Noble (2006), despite the early optimism of the new era of women's liberation and the introduction of gender equity policies and practices, women's visibility in public life, especially as leaders in industry and business, have continued to be under represented.

Many contemporary feminists argue that we have entered a post feminist era, or referred to as post Employment Equity Opportunities stage (Noble, 2006). Therefore the challenges faced by women in leadership roles are now different than the previous context, where governments played a stronger role in workplace relations including workplace equity programmes, when the feminist voice was heard loud and clear (Noble, 2006).

Noble (2006) argued that the continued under-representation of women in leadership positions was a concern mainly for two reasons. Firstly, the equal

rights and equal participation as full productive citizens was a human rights issue. Secondly, excluding women from leadership roles impacted on productivity and mitigated against a diverse workforce (Noble, 2006). Moreover, Noble (2006) explained that Probert *et al.*'s (1998) study on gender equity index in the Australian workplace performance showed that in the private and public institutions of all sizes there was a direct correlation between higher productivity and higher levels of gender equity. Models of women in senior positions and in equal numbers generally benefited the institutions offering different perspectives, experiences and contributions women can make. It seemed a tired argument but one worth repeating.

Noble (2006) goes on to say the “ongoing wastage of management and leadership talent” arising “is perpetuated by the current under representation of women at senior levels seriously undermines organisations ability to respond to change and threatens its future viability and vitality in the face of the economic challenges of the changing workplace”. The inflexibility of barriers preventing the equality between men and women at the highest level of management was destructive to good management and productive outcomes (Noble, 2006).

Burke and Mattis (2005) argued that there was ample evidence of relatively few women reaching the executive management or board positions either in Australia or on a world-wide basis. In addition, Burke and Mattis (2005) suggested that despite 30 years of rapid transformation of women in society; improved qualifications; increased numbers in management and efforts at

authenticating themselves for leadership positions by way of experience; line management; networking and other such activities; there was still very little evidence suggesting any major progress to the advancement of women to senior positions (Davidson and Burke, 2004).

Still (2005) stated that three recent Australian surveys of the number of women in senior management and on the boards of the nation's top 200 companies who represent 90% of Australia's market capitalization provide evidence that relatively few women have attained executive management or board positions.

The above mentioned surveys demonstrated that in 2004, women held only 10.2% of executive management positions (in comparison to 8.4% in 2002) and 8.6% of board directorships (8.2% in 2002). Just over 42% of the companies had no women executive managers, while 47% had no women directors. Only four women held chief executive officer positions in the 200 companies in 2004. In addition, only two women chaired boards. The numbers of women in line management positions, the conventional recruitment area for senior positions, totalled 6.5% in 2004 (an increase from 4.7% in 2003) (Still, 2005).

As reported in the Catalyst Report (2008), overall representation of women in executive levels and top earners continued to decline. In 2008, women held 15.7% of executive level positions at Fortune 500 companies compared to the 15.4% in 2007 representing all international companies. Women only held 6.2% of top earner positions in 2007, this number was 6.7% in 2008, an insignificant

change from the previous year. The number of companies with no women at corporate levels increased from 74 % in 2007 to 75 % in 2008. The number of companies with three or more women at executive levels also increased from 203 in 2007 to 206 in 2008 (Catalyst, 2008).

In conclusion, the above statistics confirm that there has been little change to the dynamics surrounding women in leadership positions worldwide.

2.2.1 South African Women in Management

Although women represent the major segment of the South African population, women only account for one third of the labour force. In addition, the Commission on Gender Equality (1999) draws attention to the fact that few women hold senior and top management positions, mainly due to the fact that workplace gender equality is underpinned by job segregation and perceived roles associated with gender groups (Commission on Gender Equality, 1999). South African women are therefore still under-utilized in the employment market and have remained a “wasted resource” (Mathur-Helm, 2004).

Only until recently, some attention had been paid to challenges faced by South African women in the workplace and management positions. The number of initiatives and documents illustrating this point, include the National Women’s Empowerment policy, the Commission on Gender Equality, the signing of a number of United Nations (UN) conventions on women, the Women’s Charter

for Effective Equality (1993), the Interim Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1993), the Reconstruction and Development Programme (1994), the South African Women on the Road to Development, Equality and Peace (Beijing Conference Plan of Action, 1995), and National Report of the Status of Women in South Africa prepared for the World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995 (Mathur-Helm, 2004).

Evidence still suggested that women who filled the lowest ranks in organizations, found it difficult to rise to senior and executive management levels, and have not benefited from government policies and legislation to advance their careers (Mathur-Helm, 2004).

According to the University of Cape Town (UCT) *Breakdown Monitor* (alluded to in Smith, 2003, p.19), in 1998 South African men accounted for 84% of management positions in South Africa; with women only accounting for 16%. By 2000 the number had increased to 21% of total management. Table 1 below demonstrates the statistics on men and women in management and skilled positions in South African companies between 1998 and 2000.

Table 1: Representation of men and women in South African companies from 1998 to 2000

		Male	Female
1998	Management	84%	16%
	Skilled	75%	25%
	Total Staff	75%	25%
1999	Management	82%	18%
	Skilled	71%	29%
	Total Staff	76%	24%
2000	Management	79%	21%
	Skilled	67%	33%
	Total Staff	72%	28%

Source: Smith (2003, p.19)

In addition, the South African Department of Labour (2004) statistics echoed similar sentiments of improvement in this regard. Table 2 below indicates a 13.62% improvement of women in management positions from 2000.

Table 2: Representation of men and women in South African companies in 2004

	Male	Female
Top Management	86.07%	13.93%
Senior Management	77.77%	22.23%
Mid-Management	61.68%	38.32%
Total Management	65.38%	34.62%
Skilled	56.28%	43.72%
Semi-Skilled	65.69%	34.31%
Unskilled	65.49%	34.51%
Total Staff	63.43%	36.57%

Adapted from: South African Department of Labour (2004, p. 71)

2.2.2 South African Women in the petroleum industry

Despite being the first industry to formally agree to a Charter, the representation of women in the petroleum industry is minimal in the senior and middle management positions. The liquid fuels and petroleum Charter was the first of all economic charters to encourage participation by historically disadvantaged South Africans however the pace of transformation has been awfully slow (Women in Energy, 2005). This, according to WOESA (2005), was largely been attributed to the fact that women were not enticed to develop their careers in the sector in addition to the organisational culture of male dominance and lack of women advancement.

The petroleum industry is of vital strategic importance to the South African economy (Banda-Hansmann, 2009). It is therefore essential to provide leadership and core management training for aspiring and current leaders who are also conversant with the complexities and challenges that face the industry (Banda-Hansmann, 2009). In dealing with the challenge, SAPIA introduced a flagship industry-specific programme known as the Leadership in Oil and Energy Certificate Programme NQF Level 7 (LOE Programme). This programme was developed primarily to facilitate women empowerment and advance leadership diversity and capacity building (Banda-Hansmann, 2009). This programme has received accolades from industry captains at large however, whether the objectives of the programme have been realised is yet to be confirmed.

According to table 3 below, of the 3017 women employed in the petroleum industry only 76 (2.5%) are in senior management positions (SAPIA Annual Report, 2008). The bulk of the positions held by women are in the specialist and middle management (25%), technically skilled (54%) and semi-skilled levels (18%).

Females account for only 6% of executive/top management positions in the South African petroleum industry employment statistics; whereas, only 19% of the senior management positions (SAPIA Annual Report, 2008).

Table 3: Workforce Profile for the Petroleum Industry

Occupational Level	Gender	African	Coloured	Indian	White	Foreign National	Total	People with Disabilities
Top Management	Female	1	0	1	1	1	4	0
	Male	10	5	5	24	20	64	0
Top Management Total		11	5	6	25	21	68	0
Senior Management	Female	15	10	5	31	11	72	1
	Male	38	44	29	153	40	304	3
Senior Management Total		53	54	34	184	51	376	4
Specialists & Mid-Management	Female	220	155	102	268	16	761	5
	Male	475	315	296	919	55	2 060	17
Specialists & Mid-Management Total		695	470	398	1 187	71	2 821	22
Skilled Technical	Female	546	445	157	474	6	1 628	10
	Male	1 132	703	508	941	17	3 301	18
Skilled Technical Total		1 678	1 148	665	1 415	23	4 929	28
Semi-Skilled	Female	243	151	38	119	1	552	8
	Male	1 408	387	124	152	1	2 072	3
Semi-Skilled Total		1 651	538	162	271	2	2 624	11

Source: SAPIA 2008 Annual Report

Very limited comprehensive research has been undertaken to date on women's participation in the South African petroleum industry. While a growing amount of literature has come to light on women's experiences and barriers in corporate organizations, very little has been directed towards gender issues in the South

African petroleum industry in particular.

2.3 Barriers to women in the petroleum industry

2.3.1 Professional Barriers

2.3.1.1 Advancement Opportunities

Style and experience were two factors according to Maskell-Pretz and Hopkins (cited in Gertzen, 2006) which limited women advancement in the engineering fraternity. Aggression and competition rates were very low in terms of management styles employed by women. Most women opted for “softer style” approaches in which they had been socialised into. This is the sought and acceptable manner in which society dictates women to conduct themselves (Gertzen, 2006); contrary to how the globally competitive business environments operate. Gertzen (2006) argued that the competitive environment in which businesses operate warrants for some controlled aggression and a competitive streak to stay ahead of the rest.

Hargon (1989), Kanter (1977), Maskell-Pretz and Hopkins (1997), cited in Gertzen (2006), stated female engineers often received differential treatment in the workplace, especially in the manufacturing and industrial environments. Gertzen (2006) explained that managers tended to discourage women from working on the refinery plant floor or out in the field, citing safety as the main reason. Sherk (2004) suggested that an important issue for professional women working in the petroleum industry is that high mobility and field experience were critical requirements for career advancement in the petroleum industry.

Sherk (2004) argued that to gain respect and promotions, oil and gas professionals had to have had adequate experience in the field, and a full understanding of the technical components across the value chain. The mobility requirements in gaining such field experience presented yet another barrier for women, due to their major responsibilities for child and domestic care (Sherk, 2004).

2.3.1.2 Mentoring Opportunities

Maskell-Pretz and Hopkins (1997, p. 34), cited in Gertzen (2006), explained mentoring as a tool “designed to provide an avenue for advancement through a supporter (a mentor) who acts as a guide, showing protégés how to navigate organisational barriers”. Fargenson (1988), cited in Gertzer (2006), suggested that mentoring networks are mainly embedded in social gatherings (for example the golf course and bars). As a result many women did not gain from its benefits as more often than not there are social responsibilities to attend to during the times allocated for such gatherings.

2.3.1.3 Barriers to Networking for women

Given the history of the petroleum industry, it is not surprising that there are not many female leaders in the industry. Sherk (2004, p. 2) explained that women working at senior professional levels in the petroleum industry “often find they have a very small female peer group, if they have one at all, and often experience isolation and lack of support from a peer network” . Sherk suggested

that the small numbers in which women find themselves in the petroleum industry prevent them from initiating radical and noteworthy organisational change at senior executive levels.

Sherk (2004) advocated that women who did succeed and managed to advance in the petroleum industry generally learn to play by established rules and behaviour patterns and become reluctant to propose innovations that would be seen as being too different, but could benefit the organization. Therefore, women tended to conform in their endeavour to fit or blend into the male dominated environments.

According to Tonge (2008) research has identified the importance of social networks for both men and women's advancement to hierarchical levels and that networking is essential for success in any professional career, but women particularly experienced a range of networking barriers. Van Emmerik *et al.* (2006), cited in Tonge (2008) highlight exclusion from key networks traditionally composed of individuals who hold power in organisations as one barrier to networking.

Linehan *et al.* (2001) cited in Tonge (2008), added recruitment and selection processes as another barrier associated with working in male-dominated industries and sectors. Tonge (2008) highlighted the role of time and family responsibilities as a further barrier. "Out-of hours" socialisation, according to Tonge (2008), resulted in important work-related outcomes, such as receiving

information or job assignments; thereby placing further disadvantage for women in their network participation, due to less time spent with their male counterparts as a result of home and family commitments.

2.3.1.4 Training opportunities

Women have taken strides in terms of improving their qualifications in order to advance their careers; however, statistics still indicate fewer women participation in senior positions and board participation. Qualified women with university degrees and postgraduate qualification still face difficulties in obtaining employment and subsequently advancing into senior positions in corporate jobs (Mathur-Helm, 2004).

Mathur-Helm (2004) stated that affirmative action had only allowed women entry into jobs; however this had not determined their progress into senior positions. Mathur-Helm (2004) suggested a Masters in Business Administrations (MBA), as a more appropriate qualification required for promotion into managerial positions. An MBA has proved quite helpful in advancing women into lower and middle level management positions (Adler, 1993, cited in Mathur-Helm (2004)), and an MBA qualification has given women distinct advantages in South Africa too.

A Cape Times (2004) article (cited in Mathur-Helm, 2004, p. 63) indicated that “women in senior positions believe that the MBA has given them in-depth general management knowledge, the ability to develop equal opportunity in

South Africa in areas where they can add value and the confidence to lead others”. Mathur-Helm (2004, p. 63) emphasised that “a good Master of Business Administration” (MBA) “teaches interpersonal proficiency and the skill to empower people”. Mathur-Helm (2004) suggested that the above mentioned two skills which the MBA equips one with were major requirements in the changing leadership premise.

2.3.1.5 The “Old Boys” Club mindset

According to Gertzen (2006), informal network played a crucial role in advancement opportunities in most organisations. Such networks facilitated the exchange of information, career planning and strategy, professional support and encouragement, as well as increased visibility in the business (Gertzen, 2006).

According to Cooper Jackson ((2001, p. 32), Gatta & Mckay (2003, p. 10) and Smith (2003, p. 24), cited in Gertzen (2006), “old boys clubs” are longstanding tradition in most male dominated organisations, “especially those in the areas of science and technology”. As a result of these “old boys clubs” women are excluded from meetings, information sharing and important decision making sessions. As a result, women do not receive the same opportunities as their male counterparts in terms of information sharing, career path planning, mentoring opportunities and professional support (Gertzen, 2006).

2.3.2 Psychological Barriers

2.3.2.1 Work-Life Balance

Sprunt (2006) argued that work-life balance was important to women in the petroleum industry. Highlighting the fact that flexible working arrangements included part-time work and tele-communicating which could help retain women within the industry.

2.3.2.2 Gender discrimination

Cassell (1997) explained, regardless of equal opportunities legislation put into place, Wilson (1989), (cited in Cassell, 1997), advocated that the notion that equal opportunity now exists for women was but a legend. Cassell (1997) suggested that in the UK there seemed to be significant disillusionment about the lack of women advancement into management positions, given 20 years of Equal Opportunity legislation. Many are of the view that such legislation has done little to redress the more roundabout forms of discrimination as by their very nature they do not appear discriminatory rather as part of normal everyday working trends (Cassell, 1997).

2.3.2.3 Gender Stereotyping

According to Cornerly, Mechan and Straus (2008) a recent review of research on gender and leadership roles supported for “role congruity theory” which suggested that two forms of prejudice advocated by Eagly and Karau, 2002 (cited in Cornelly et al, 2008) are the result of the perceived inappropriateness of the female role and leadership roles . These two forms of prejudice include:

- perceiving women less favourably than men in leadership roles; and
- evaluating women’s behaviour while in the leader role less favourably compared to men in the same role.

Cornelly *et al.* (2008, p. 303) explained that men were preferred for “male sex-typed jobs and that men and women were preferred for female sex-typed jobs”. These preferences are underpinned by the stereotypes that exist regarding the jobs society deems acceptable for women. Powell *et al.* (2002), cited in Cornelly *et al.* (2008), suggested in their research that both men and women perceived a “good manager” to be more masculine in nature. Therefore, advocating that women appear to be “buying into” the “think manager-think male” phenomenon (Cornelly *et al.*, 2008).

2.4 Conclusion

Professional and psychological barriers, as evidenced in the literature review above, continue to prevail in spheres that hinder women progression in the workplace in spite of legislative policies to enhance women advancement. Work-life balance, insufficient networking opportunities and lack of role models represent the biggest barriers women are confronted with to this regard. Gender inequality, as suggested by the literature review, seems to be a curse women continue to fight throughout their career progression. The “think manager-think male” phenomenon is a demon that women over the past centuries have had to fight in the endeavor to prove their worth and abilities.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH QUESTIONS

3.1 Introduction

Thorough research was undertaken on gender equality and barriers women encountered with regard to career advancement. This research report sought to assess the challenges that are making it difficult for women to climb up the corporate ladder using the South African petroleum industry as a premise. Work-life balance, insufficient networking opportunities for women and the lack of role models were some of the challenges cited in the literature review undertaken; and formed a fundamental component of the research discussion.

3.2 Research Question 1

Are there barriers to entering management/senior positions, if so, what are they?

3.3 Research Question 2

What were the primary factors motivating women to consider advancing their careers in the petroleum industry?

3.4 Research Question 3

Are women who are currently in management positions satisfied with their career advancement?

3.5 Research Question 4

In hindsight, as a woman, was it a good idea to enter the petroleum industry?

3.6 Research Question 5

Are there realistic career advancement options for women in the petroleum industry?

3.7 Research Question 6

Given the male dominated nature of the industry – has industry put adequate measures in place to address women advancement?

3.8 Research Question 7

What are the perceived career paths for young females entering the petroleum industry?

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

This Chapter explored viable alternatives and details appropriate research methodology to conduct the research. This chapter comprised the following sections: research approach and design, data collection methods, ethical considerations and coding and analysis.

4.2 Research Methodology

This study aimed to explore challenges women faced in advancing their careers within the petroleum industry. This assessment looked into the current challenges facing women in other countries and industries and attempted to highlight the similarities identified. In addition, the study attempted to establish whether challenges identified in the literature above, hold true in the South African context. In addition, the respondents were invited to volunteer ideas on how the challenges could be best eliminated.

The following questions were answered by this research:

- Were there barriers to entering management/senior positions, if so, what were they?
- What were the primary factors motivating women to consider advancing their careers in the petroleum industry?

- Were women who were currently in management positions satisfied with their career advancement; was it a good idea to enter the petroleum industry in hindsight?
- Given the male dominated feature of the petroleum industry – were there adequate measures in place to cater for women advancement?
- Were there realistic career advancement options for women in the petroleum industry?
- What were the perceived career paths for young females entering the petroleum industry?

As mentioned in the Section 1.6 the research was both quantitative and qualitative to establish the extent to which women were able to advance their careers within the petroleum industry. Qualitative research was used for the purpose of the investigation and gaining a better understanding of the challenges women face regarding career advancement to senior management positions. The qualitative part of the research provided a base for further research in order to provide conclusive evidence for the topic in question (Zukmund (2003), p. 55).

In addition, quantitative research was employed to “describe characteristics of the population” (Zukmund (2003), p. 55). Section 2 of the questionnaire

comprised of open-ended questions which represented the qualitative part of the study. This section of the questionnaire was included to clarify perceptions which would have been identified in the close-ended section of the questionnaire.

4.3 The Population and Unit of Analysis

The population for this study was developed using the criteria for admission to the Leadership in Energy and Oil Program (LOE) which is facilitated by the South African Petroleum Industry Association (SAPIA). For the purposes of this study, the sampling frame was women with at least three years management experience working within the petroleum industry.

The questionnaire was sent out to 100 women who completed the LOE programme and still employed within the petroleum industry. An additional twenty (20) questionnaires were forwarded to women in senior positions within the petroleum industry. The questionnaires were circulated electronically and in hard copy format.

Twenty-five (25) women graduates from the LOE programme and seven (7) of the women in senior positions within the industry responded to the questionnaire. Only four (4) of the seven (7) oil companies namely: BP Southern Africa, Engen Petroleum, Sasol Limited and Total South Africa participated in the research. Chevron, PetroSA and Shell South Africa did not

participate in the research as permission was not granted by their respective Human Resources Development Managers.

4.4 Research Instrument

Surveys were used as a form of collecting data using a questionnaire. The research was undertaken by means of questionnaires examining the perceptions of the respondents on challenges facing women within the petroleum industry with regard to career advancement.

A questionnaire was designed focusing on perceived challenges to career development and gender equality by women within the petroleum industry. The questionnaire has been attached as Annexure A of this report. The main purpose of the survey was to establish the core challenges hindering women advancement to more senior and/or executive positions; and the perceptions held by respondents pertaining career progression for women within the petroleum industry.

The questionnaire contained three sections. The first section comprised biographical information. The second section contained closed-ended questions that required answers rated on a 5-point Likert scale. The last section comprised of open-ended questions on career advancement of women within the petroleum industry.

The questionnaire looked at perceptions identified in other industries; focusing

on issues identified in the literature review.

A test sample of two questionnaires was used to test the questionnaire in terms of clarity, language, fit for purpose. The test samples were well received; thereafter the rest of the questionnaires were sent out to the rest of the population. Slight changes were made to some of the questions to fine-tune the questionnaire. The six samples of questionnaire sent out initially required fixing of minor errors of numbering which were corrected prior to sending to the entire population under review.

4.5 Biographical information

The first section of the questionnaire comprised questions of biographical nature. The respondents were required to answer questions regarding their respective ages, marital status, parental status, highest qualifications and how long they had been at management level and working within the petroleum industry.

4.6 Closed-ended questions

The second section consisted of 22 statements that required a rating on a 5-point Likert type scale. The respondents had to indicate the extent to which they agree with the statement by selecting a response ranging from “Strongly Disagree” to “Not applicable”. Most of the question focused on gender equality, career development of women within the petroleum industry and challenges that hinder career advancement of women. The questionnaire also attempted to

establish perceptions underpinning such lack of career development/progression.

The questionnaire contained the following closed-ended questions:

- **Before entering a management position, I had a clear career path.** This question measured the original intended career path of the respondents, trying to establish whether they had planned entering the petroleum industry in the first place.
- **My organisation has a good representation of women in management/senior positions.** This questions measured gender equality within the petroleum industry and whether there has been strides since the implementation of employment equity legislation.
- **In my organisation, it is easier to enter management positions.** This question assessed ease of entry to management positions by women.
- **My organisation has set clear guidelines in terms of my career development.** This question measured the extent to which career paths are put in place for women advancement and how career advancement takes place within the petroleum industry.
- **Women in my organisation do not have adequate support to enable proper advancement.** This statement assessed professional barriers to

career advancement within the petroleum industry.

- **There is a lack of mentoring opportunities for women in my organisation.** This statement measured professional barriers to career advancement in terms of opportunities that exist within the petroleum industry.
- **There is a lack of training opportunities for women in the industry.** This question evaluated professional barriers to career development of women in terms of perceived training opportunities within the petroleum industry.
- **Women are better suited to management than to engineering.** This question measured the perceived differences between psychological barriers to career advancement for women within the petroleum industry and management with regard to gender discrimination.
- **There is a perception amongst my male colleagues that women are not better suited to management positions.** This question sought to establish perceptions pertaining to gender stereotypes within the petroleum industry.
- **The "old boys' club" is less prevalent in management positions.** This statement explored the difference between professional barriers for

women to advance to management positions with regard to the effect of the “old boys’ club”.

- **Over the years, women in my organisation have found it easy to climb up the corporate ladder.** This statement measured the gender equality and advancement opportunities for women within the petroleum industry.
- **Gender discrimination is less prevalent in my organisation.** This statement measured perceived differences between psychological barriers to management positions.
- **I am happy / fulfilled as a manager.** This statement assessed the respondent’s level of job satisfaction within their respective management positions.
- **I am more self-confident as a manager because of the support structures in place within my organisation.** This statement investigated the psychological barriers to women’s career advancement with regard to self-esteem.
- **My career as manager meets the expectations I had when entering the position.** This statement assessed the respondent’s level of fulfilled in their careers as managers.

- **My prospects of promotion into a more senior management position are high.** This statement assessed respondent's perception of career progression and path of women within the petroleum industry.
- **Women and men in my organisation are given equal opportunities in terms of career advancement.** This statement measured gender equality within the petroleum industry.
- **Work-life balance is not a problem within my organisation.** This statement assessed the degree of flexible working arrangements within the petroleum industry.
- **Once at management/senior positions, women hamper/block the advancement of other women.** This statement assessed level of women support for each other.
- **My organisation has put in place policies and initiated programs to address inequalities in the workplace which are working well.** The statement assessed the level to which petroleum industry has embraced/promoted the employment equity legislation.
- **Women behave differently once they get to management positions.** The statement measured the gender stereotyping that exists within the

industry.

- **The reason women do not get promoted to senior positions is because of family/mother responsibilities.** This statement assessed the psychological barriers to career development.
- **Women in my organisation have to work twice as hard as their male counterparts to obtain recognition/promotions.** This statement measured the level of gender discrimination within the petroleum industry and perceptions of gender equality within the petroleum industry.

4.6.1 Open-ended questions

The third section of the questionnaire contained open-ended questions which investigate the respondent's perception of women advancement to senior positions and career path planning within the petroleum industry in the context of their organisations. Lastly, these questions also attempted to obtain respondent's suggestions on what could be done in order to increase significant levels of women presence in senior positions.

4.7 Data Collection and Sampling

The sample for this study was developed using the criteria for admission to the Leadership in Energy and Oil (LOE) Programme which is facilitated by the South African Petroleum Industry Association (SAPIA). The LOE program was designed to broaden the perspective of participants whose previous experience

was mainly in a specialist area through exposure to the fundamental nature of process of management and human behaviour within organisations and targets middle managers and professionals with a minimum of three to five years experience.

The main objective of the LOE is to facilitate women empowerment and capacity building within the industry in line with the Petroleum and Liquid Fuels Charter (The Petroleum Professional Journal, 2008). For the purpose of this study, the sampling frame was women with at least three years management experience.

The population was comprised of 32 women with at least three (3) years experience. Of the thirty-two (32) women, twenty-five (25) graduated from the LOE programme (obtained from the LOE database); seven (7) of which were women in senior management levels within the petroleum. Word of mouth recommendations was used to identify women in the senior/executive positions within the petroleum industry.

The questionnaires were sent out via electronic mail, some were hand delivered. A covering letter containing the background to the research topic, the due date for the return, the e-mail address to which the questionnaire must be sent and affirmation of confidentiality were attached as part of the questionnaire. The programme managers responsible for the Gauteng and Western Cape Province of the LOE programme forwarded the electronic

questionnaires to the women on the database. The electronic questionnaires were returned directly to the researcher. The hand delivered questionnaires were personally delivered to the respondents and given two weeks to respond. A reminder was sent to all hand delivered questionnaire recipients at the end of the first week; and the collection took place on the set date as per covering letter.

4.8 Ethical Consideration

Ethical clearance was obtained prior to the collection of data wherein the Research Ethics Committee of the Gordon Institute of Business Science approved the research methodology and ethic standards followed for the purposes of this research.

4.8.1 Informed Consent

Consent was received from each of the respective oil company Human Resource Development managers to access all the female managers that graduated on the LOE programme. In addition, consent was received from Cape Town LOE programme facilitators to circulate the questionnaire. The Johannesburg programme facilitators send the researcher a database of women who graduated from the LOE programme.

4.8.2 Anonymity

The questionnaire was sent via e-mail and hard copy to individuals. All company specific details were removed from all received data. The respondents

were prompted to forward the completed electronic questionnaires directly to the researcher. Since the electronic responses could identify the respondents' employer (oil company in question), only the researcher handled the questionnaire in order to retain anonymity. The hand delivered questionnaires were also only handled by the researcher. In addition, all data was stored without identifiers. Lastly, aggregate information was provided.

4.8.3 Safe Guarding of Raw data

Information was made available only to the researcher. In addition, all data received was stored electronically and in a file in a safe place. In terms of viruses, the data was saved firstly on a laptop with virus protection and on a disk that was only accessible by the researcher.

4.9 Coding and Analysis

The value description method was used to quantify the results of the questionnaire. Therefore every response was converted into a numerical value. Responses to the closed-ended questions were assigned values from 1 to 5. Value 1 corresponded to “strongly disagree” and value 5 corresponded to answers of “not applicable”. The scale was designed for challenges facing women advancement to be tested positively. For example, the statement: “There is a lack of training opportunities for women in the petroleum industry”, induced a positive response to test for the challenges facing women as “lack of training”.

The open-ended questions were analysed to identify related responses. All related responses were grouped and categorised, and a value was assigned to each category. For example, the response “I chose a career path in this industry because there were few women participants and recognised it as an opportunity to make a name for myself” would fall into Category 1, “Recognition”.

Microsoft Excel was used for data analysis and graphical representations. The initial analysis centred on the biographical information to provide a perspective of the population in question. Graphs were used to demonstrate evident and recurring trends and correlations. Once all analysis regarding the population biographical data was completed, the second and third sections of the questionnaire were analysed using graphs and a regression analysis (for Section 2). The regression findings were used further to assess trends exhibited in the data.

5 CHAPTER 5: RESULTS

5.1 Biographical information of the respondents

5.1.1 Age

The age of the respondents ranged from the 24-30 to 40-59 year groups (see Figure 5.1 below). The majority (68.75%) were in the 30 and 39 age group. This was expected as the LOE criteria targeted women with at least three years experience which is generally found in these age groups.

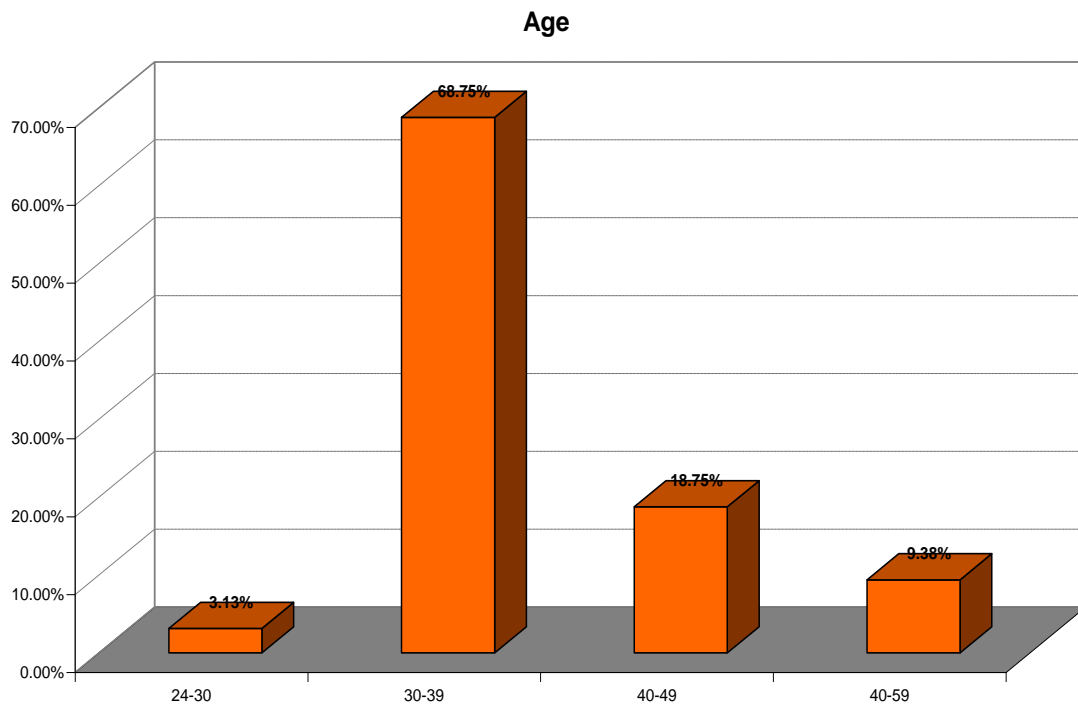


Figure 1: Age Demographic

5.1.1.1 Summary of Age Demographic

The age demographics is summarised in Table 4

Table 4: Age demographics

Age	Frequency
24-30	3.13%
30-39	68.75%
40-49	18.75%
40-59	9.38%

5.1.2 Marital Status

The majority (43.75%) of respondents were single, followed by 40.63% married respondents. Divorce rates were prevalent in the categories of women with 1-3; 7-9 and 10+ years management experience (see Figure 2 below). None of the respondents with 4-6 years management experience were divorced.

Marital Status

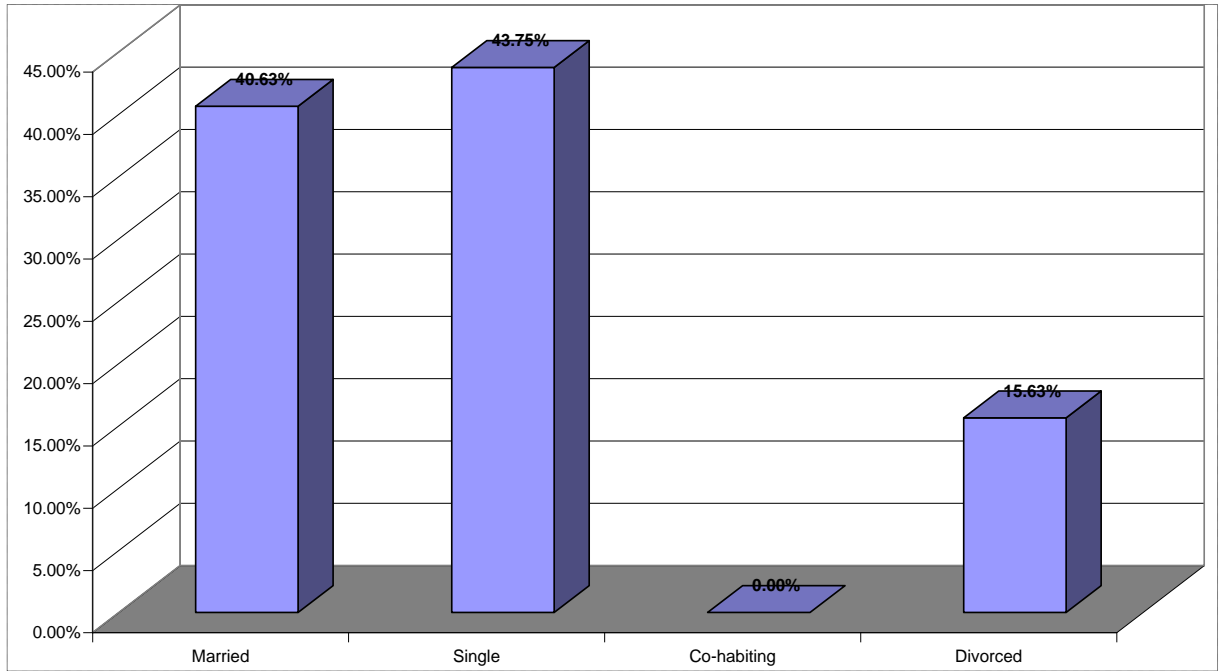


Figure 2: Marital Status Demographics

Marital Status vs. No of Yrs in Management

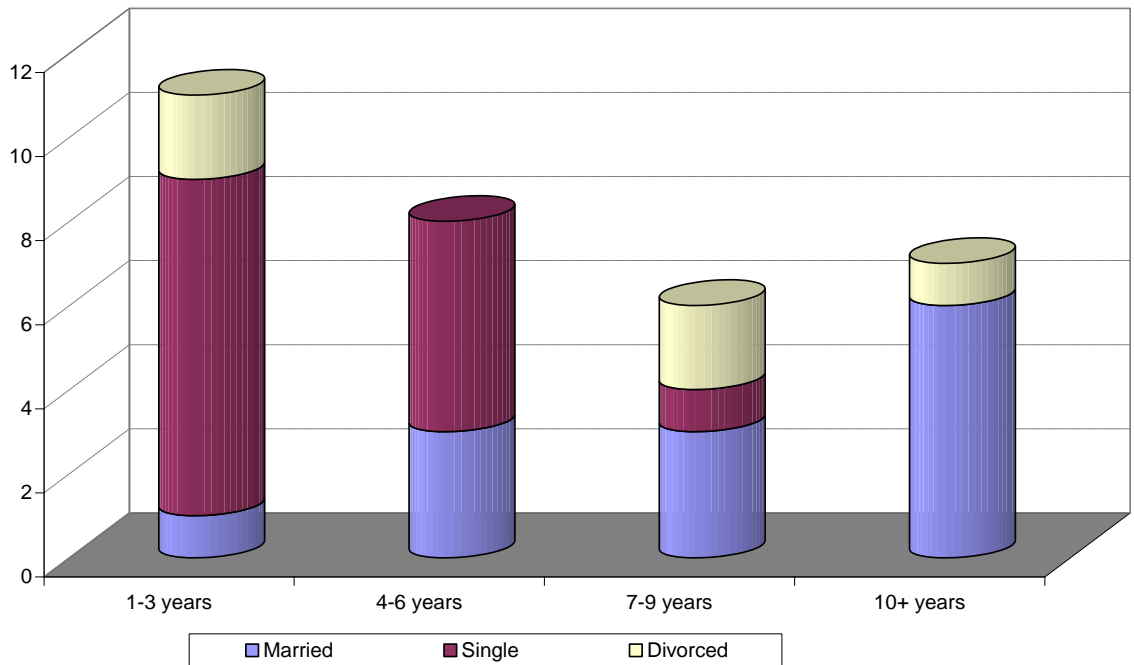


Figure 3: Marital Statuses vs. Number of Years in Management

Figure 3 above suggest that women with 1-3 years management experience are

mainly single. There were no single women in the 10+ years management experience category. The women with 1-3 years management experience had least number of married women. Married women were prevalent in the four years plus management experience category.

5.1.2.1 Summary of Marital Status Findings

The marital status of the respondents is presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Marital status

Marital Status	Frequency
Married	40.63%
Single	43.75%
Co-habiting	0.00%
Divorced	15.63%
Widow	0.00%

Age vs. Marital Status

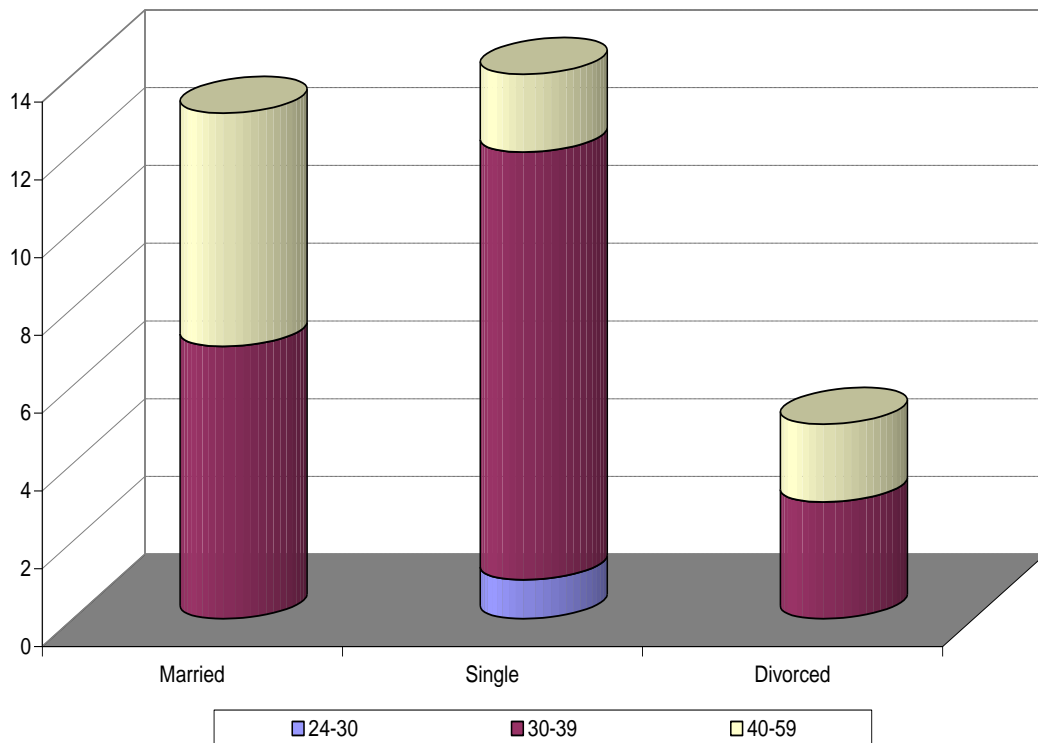


Figure 4: Age vs. Marital Status Chart

According to Figure 4 above, divorce rates appear more prevalent in the 24-30 age group. The 30-39 age group had the majority of single women followed by the 24-30 age group. Marriage was prevalent in the 40-59 age group.

5.1.3 Race

The majority (65.63%) of the respondents were black women managers, followed by 15.63% white women managers. The Indian and Coloured women each represented 9.38% of the respondents.

Race

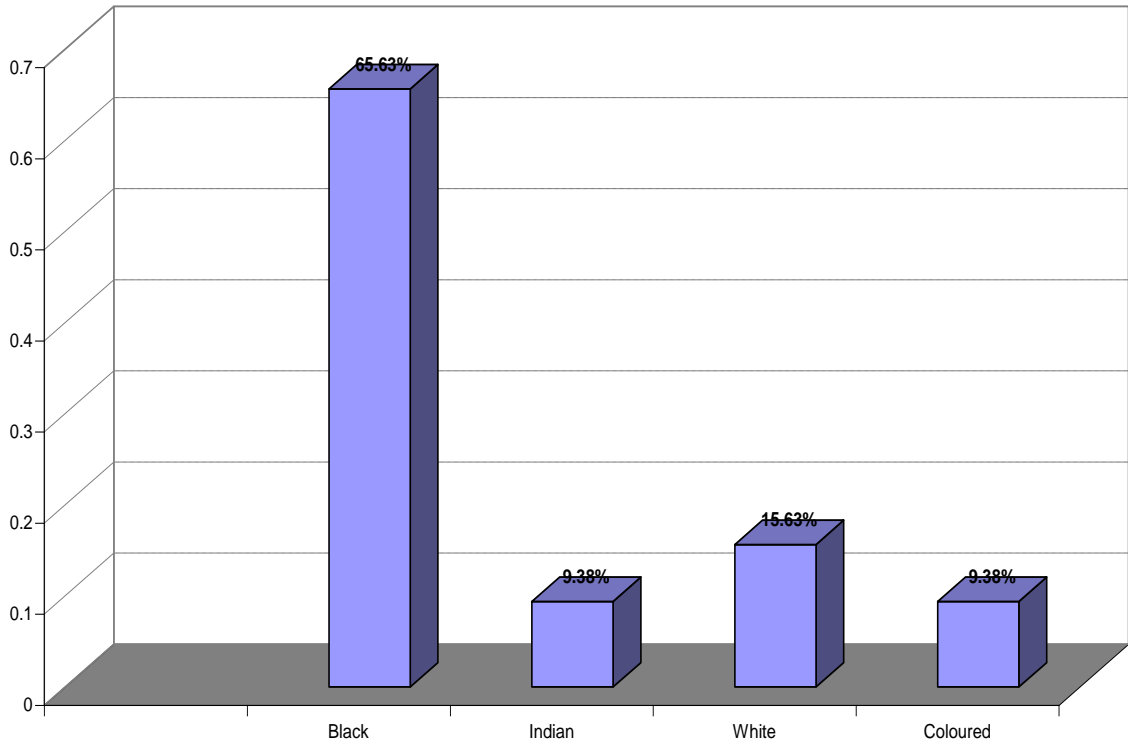


Figure 5: Race Demographic

5.1.3.1 Summary of Race Respondents

The racial spread of respondents is summarized in Table 6.

Table 6: Racial Representation

Race	Frequency
Black	65.63%
Indian	9.38%
White	15.63%
Coloured	9.38%

5.1.4 Child Care Responsibilities

The majority (59.38%) of the respondents had parental responsibilities. The majority of the respondents with parental responsibilities had over four (4) years management experience (refer to Figure 6 below). For some reason, 3.13% of the women opted not to respond to the question. An alarming 37.5% of the women did not have parental status.

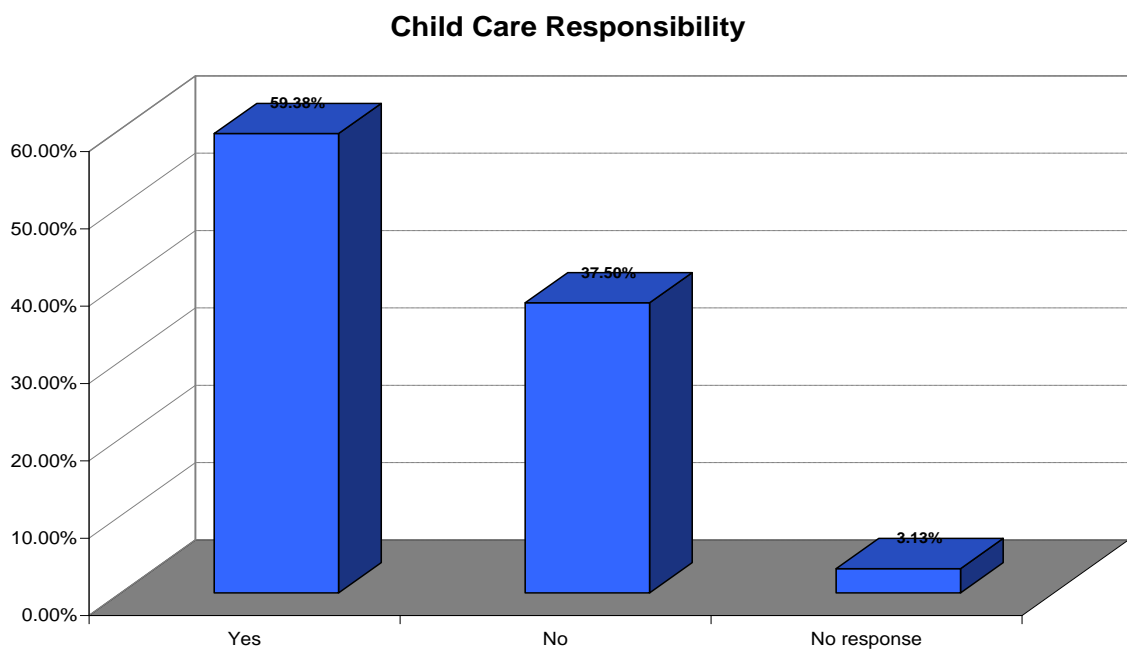


Figure 6: Parental Status of women

Number of yrs in Mngement vs Child Care Responsibility

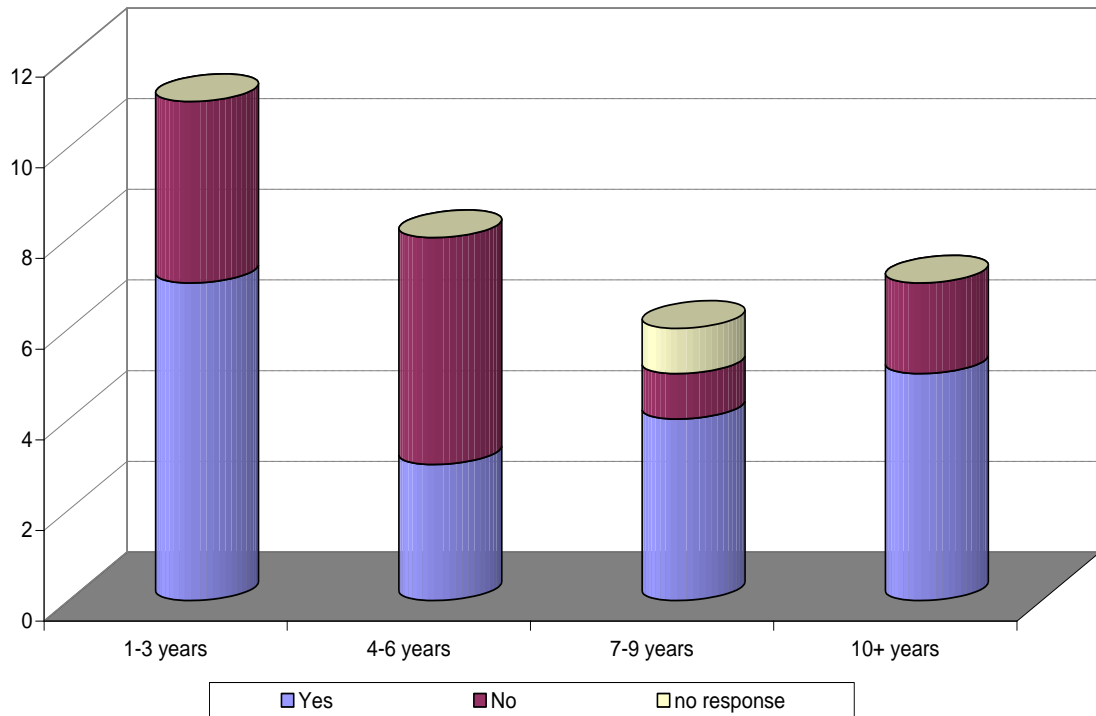


Figure 7: Parental status and managerial levels for women managers

The respondents with 1-3 years management experience had the least parental responsibilities. In addition, the result indicate that women in the both the 1-3 and 10+ years management experience has the most parental responsibilities (See Figure 7).

5.1.4.1 Summary of Child Care responsibilities findings

The responsibility for child care by the respondents is summarised in Table 7.

Table 7: Child Care responsibility

Child Care responsibility	Frequency
Yes	59.38%
No	37.50%
No response	3.13%

5.1.5 Education

5.1.5.1 Highest Qualification

The literature review presented in Chapter 2 highlighted the importance of tertiary qualifications for women to advance to senior positions. It was therefore not a surprise to observe that over 90% of the respondents had a basic degree (See Figure 8). The findings indicated that 21.88% of the women had a doctorate degree. It was particularly fascinating to observe that over 56% of the respondents had a post graduate degree (See Figure 8). In addition, it was equally intriguing to establish that all the respondents had some level of post secondary/matric qualification (See Figure 8 and 9).

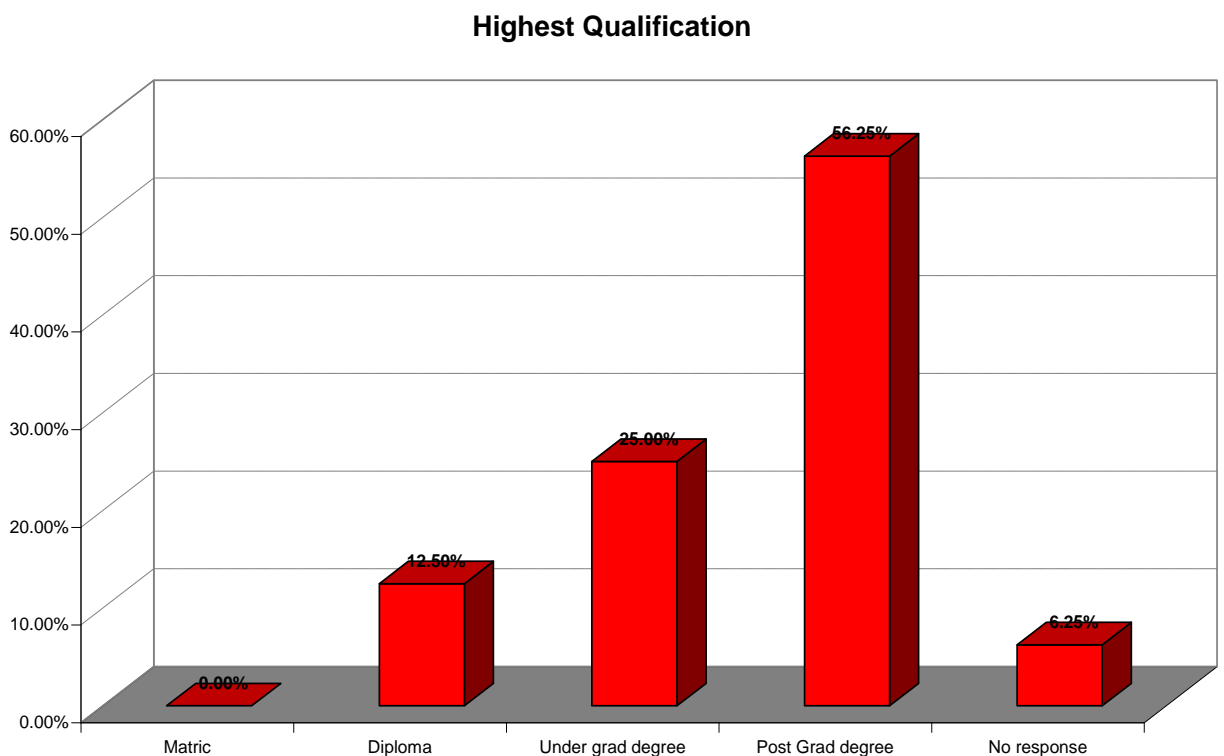


Figure 8: Qualification Levels

Qualifications Clarity

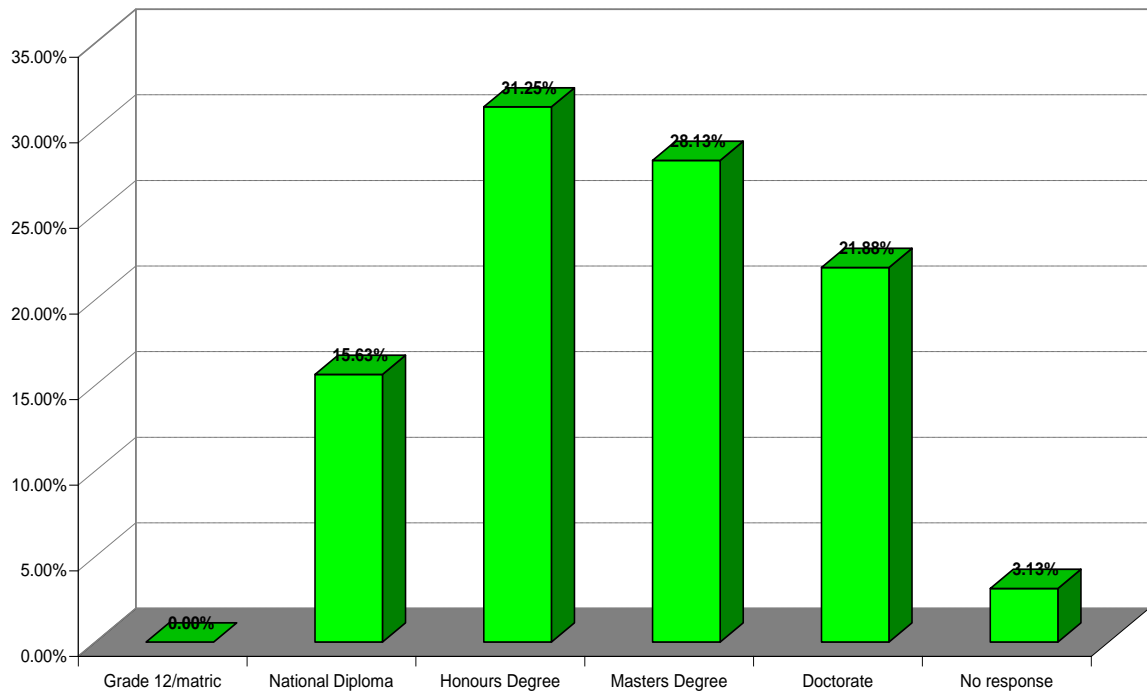


Figure 9: Breakdown of qualifications

Over 56% of the women respondents had a post graduate degree: comprised of 31.25% Honours, 28.13% Masters and 21.88% Masters Degree. The level of doctorate qualifications, given the small sample, was captivating (See Figure 9).

Qualifications vs No of Yrs Mngement

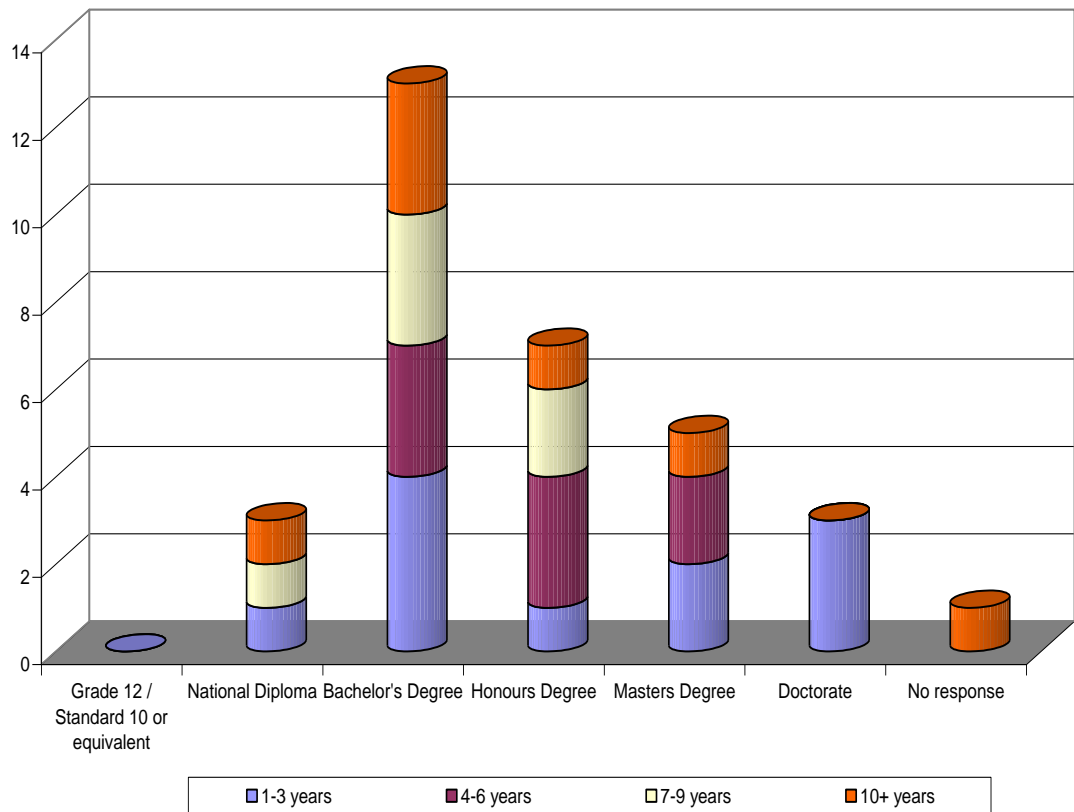


Figure 10: Highest Qualifications vs. Number of years in management

The respondents with 4-6 years management experience predominantly had a bachelor’s degree. The findings suggested that women with 10+ management experience were more reluctant to disclose their qualifications. In addition, the results indicate that women with national diplomas were the least represented in the sample.

5.1.5.2 Summary of Findings

A summary of the findings on qualifications are presented in Table 8.

Table 8: Summary of Qualifications

Highest qualification	Frequency
Matric	0.00%
Diploma	12.50%
Under grad degree	25.00%
Post Grad degree	56.25%
No response	6.25%

Clarity of qualifications	Frequency
Grade 12/matric	0.00%
National Diploma	15.63%
Honours Degree	31.25%
Masters Degree	28.13%
Doctorate	21.88%
No response	3.13%

5.1.6 Number of years in management

The majority (34.38%) of the respondents were found in the 1-3 years management experience category, followed by the 4-6 years management and 10+ years in management (25% each) (See Figure 11). Due to the fact that the questionnaire did not request clarity on management levels and how long it took the respondents to get to those levels, it was not possible to determine trends to this regard.

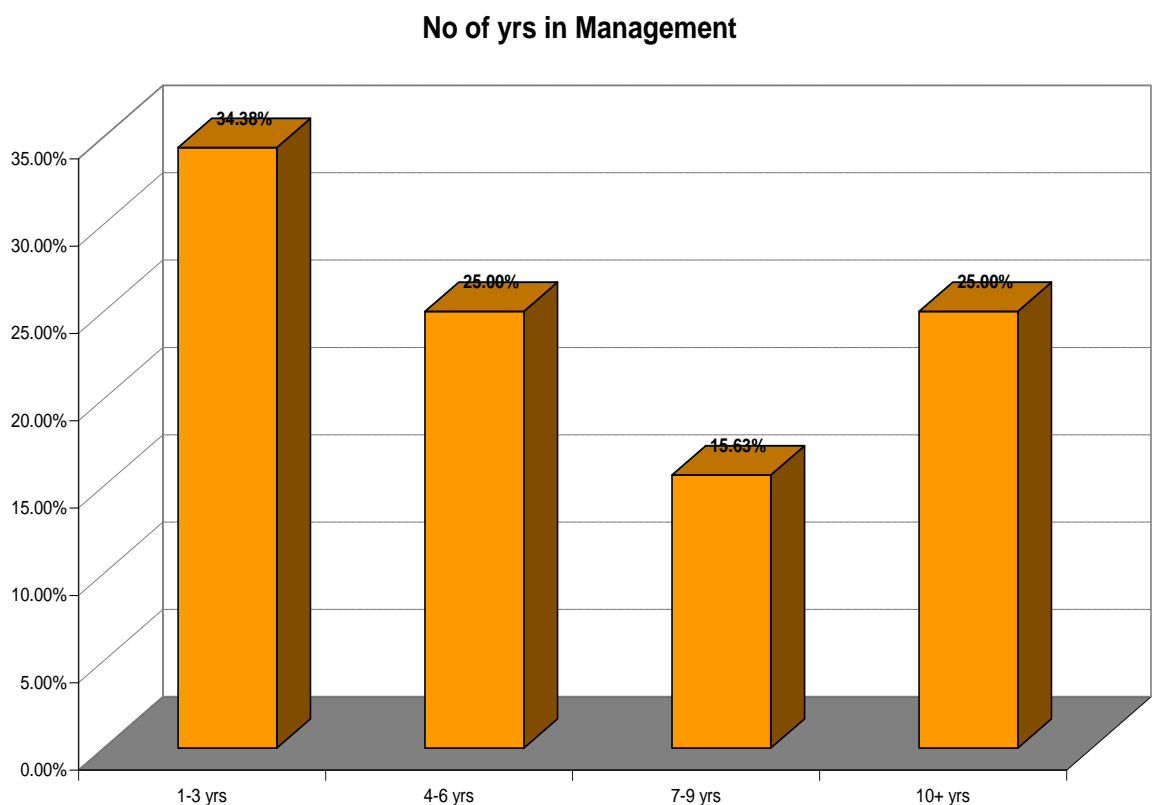


Figure 11: Number of years in management

The 4-6 years management experience was only made up by the 30-39 Age group (see Figure 12). The majority of the women with over ten (10) years

management experience were in the 40-59 age group. Figure 12 below suggest that women in 30-39 age group are largely represented in the categories 1-3 years and 4-6 years management experience, presumably the junior to middle management levels.

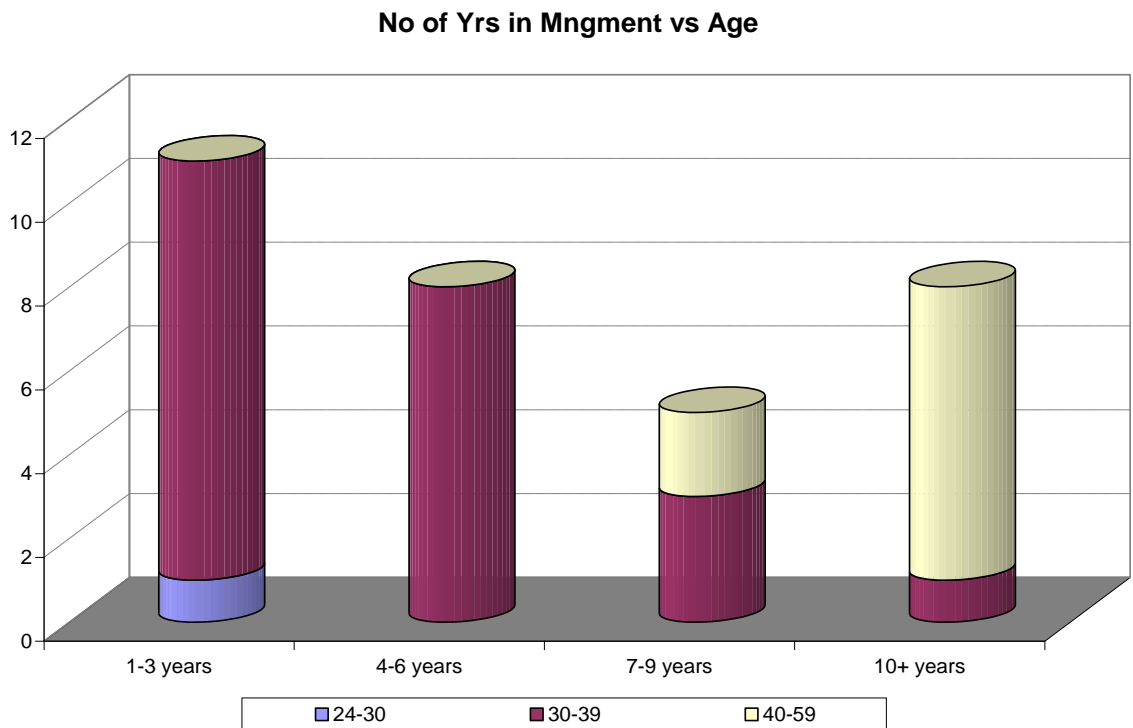


Figure 12: Number of years in management vs. Age

No of yrs in Management vs. Race

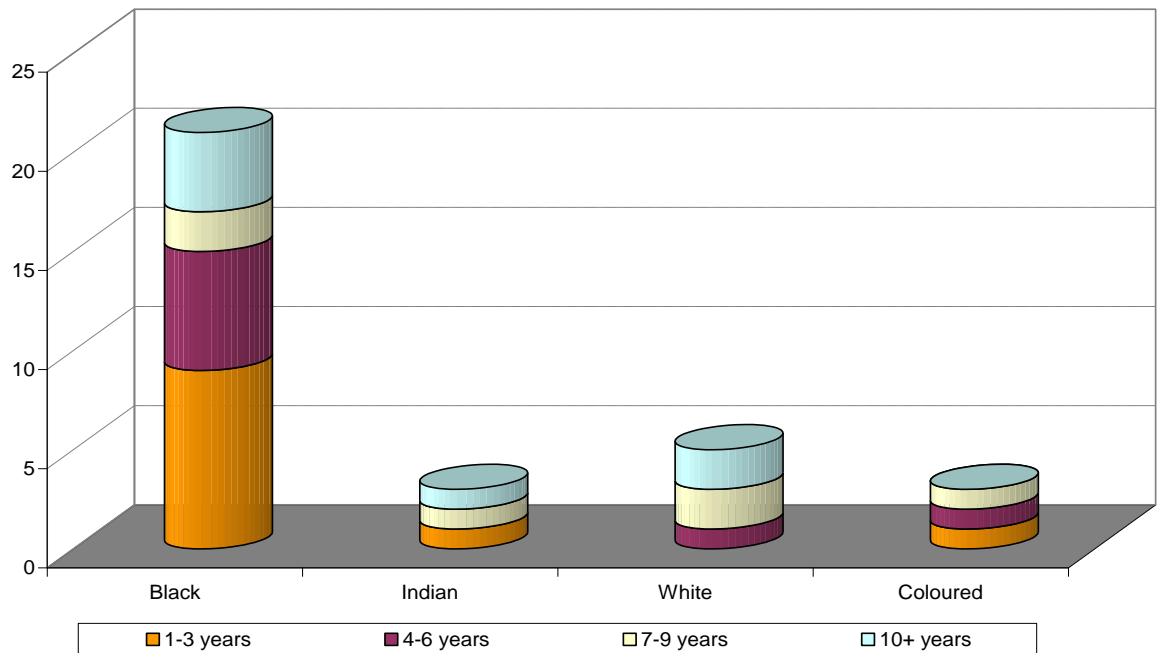


Figure 13: Number of years in management vs. Race

Figure 13 above suggests that the black respondents had the least management experience compared to other races. In addition, the white respondents had the most management experience compared to other races.

5.1.6.1 Summary of findings

The years experience can be summarised as follow in Table 9.

Table 9: Years Experience

No of yrs in mngmnt	Frequency
1-3 yrs	34.38%
4-6 yrs	25.00%
7-9 yrs	15.63%
10+ yrs	25.00%

5.1.7 Number of years in the Petroleum Industry

The respondents were adequately spread across the categories. Women with 4-6 years and 7-9 years management experience each accounted for 25% of respondents. In addition, 21,88% of the respondents had 4-6 years management experience; while 25% accounted for by women with over 10 years management experience (See Figure 14).

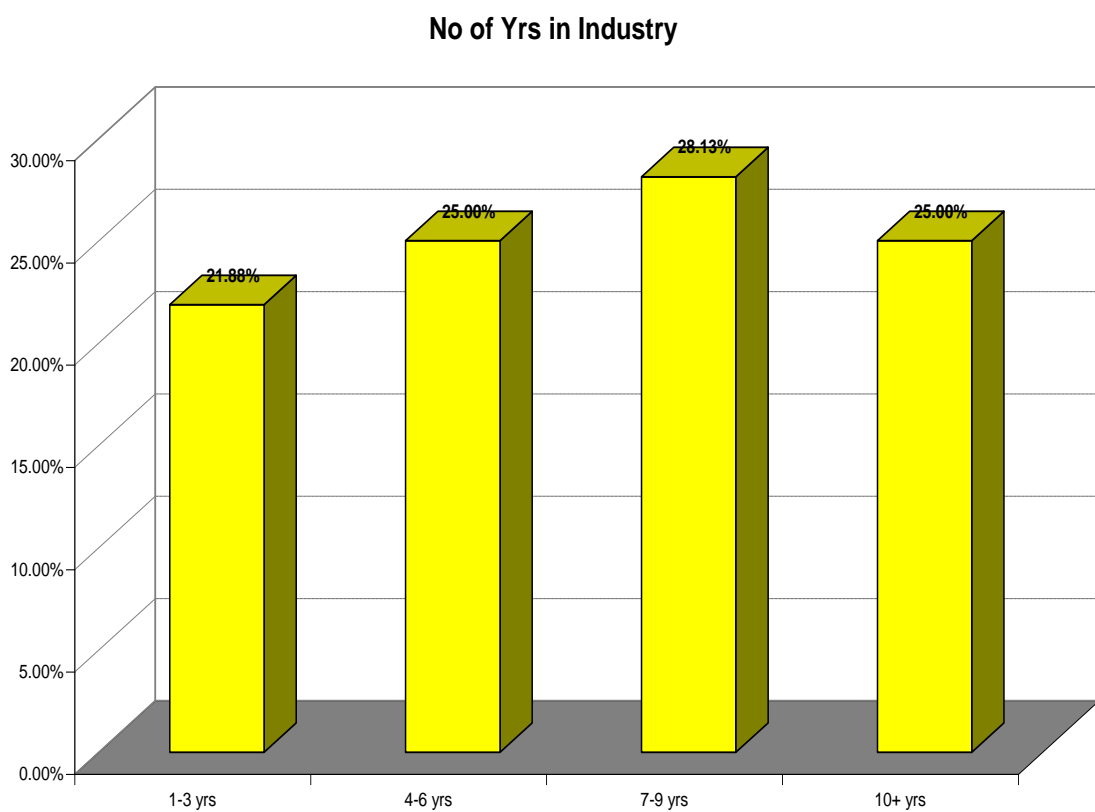


Figure 14: Number of years in industry

Years in Industry vs Years in Mngment

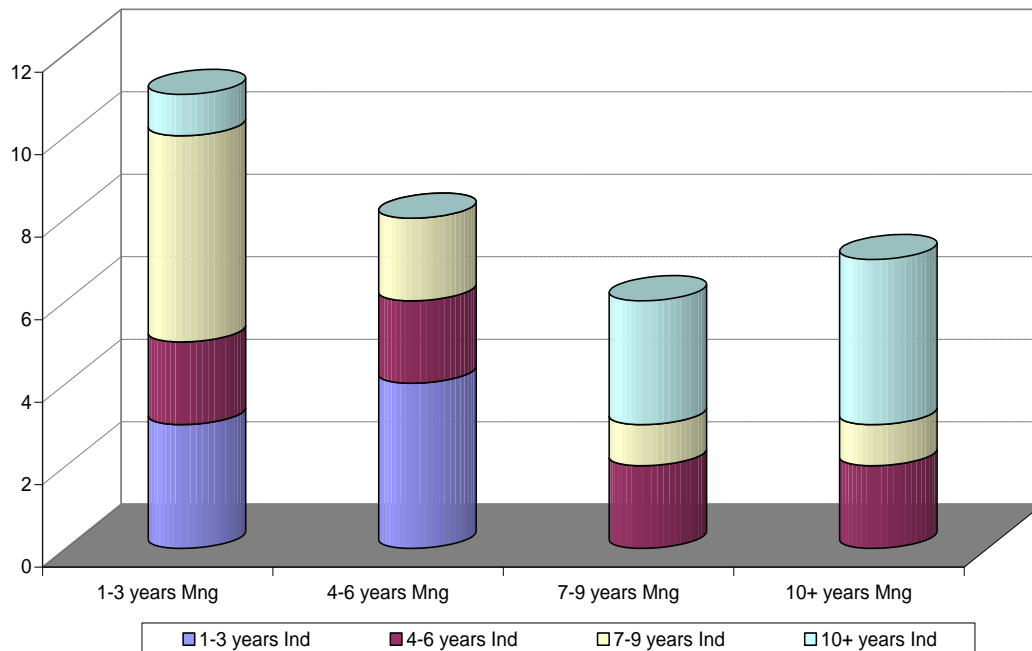


Figure 15: Number of years in Industry vs. Number of years in Management

Figure 15 indicates a positive correlation between the number of years spent in the industry and years in management. All the respondents with less experience within the petroleum industry have less management experience.

5.1.8 Closed-ended Questions (Likert Scale): Section 2

Section 2 of the Questionnaire was intended to provide perceptions/views held by respondents with regard to why women advancement within the petroleum industry had not been a success. This section was comprised of 22 questions which identified challenges highlighted in the literature review to investigate whether those identified are applicable within the South African petroleum industry context.

5.1.8.1 Summary of Findings

Table 10: Section 2 Analysis

Frequency	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable	No Response
Question 9	12.5%	12.5%	34.4%	40.6%	0.0%	0.0%
Question 10	31.25%	46.88%	15.63%	3.13%	3.13%	0.00%
Question 11	31.25%	59.38%	9.38%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Question 12	15.63%	50.00%	28.13%	6.25%	0.00%	0.00%
Question 13	0.00%	40.63%	46.88%	12.50%	0.00%	0.00%
Question 14	3.13%	31.25%	43.75%	21.88%	0.00%	0.00%
Question 15	6.25%	50.00%	31.25%	12.50%	0.00%	0.00%
Question 16	15.63%	46.88%	25.00%	6.25%	3.13%	3.13%
Question 17	3.13%	34.38%	40.63%	21.88%	0.00%	0.00%
Question 18	31.25%	34.38%	25.00%	9.38%	0.00%	0.00%
Question 19	34.38%	43.75%	21.88%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Question 20	15.63%	43.75%	34.38%	0.00%	3.13%	3.13%
Question 21	0.00%	56.25%	28.13%	6.25%	0.00%	9.38%
Question 22	0.00%	68.75%	28.13%	3.13%	0.00%	0.00%
Question 23	15.63%	34.38%	37.50%	12.50%	0.00%	0.00%
Question 24	31.25%	34.38%	28.13%	6.25%	0.00%	0.00%
Question 25	21.88%	50.00%	28.13%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Question 26	9.38%	43.75%	37.50%	3.13%	6.25%	0.00%
Question 27	0.00%	46.88%	46.88%	6.25%	0.00%	0.00%
Question 28	0.00%	34.38%	50.00%	15.63%	0.00%	0.00%
Question 29	6.25%	53.13%	25.00%	9.38%	6.25%	0.00%
Question 30	0.00%	21.88%	31.25%	46.88%	0.00%	0.00%

Table 11: Respondents perceptions of the petroleum industry

Questions	Perception investigated	Mean
Question 9	Petroleum industry is the industry of choice	5.6
Question 10	Gender equality and employment equity within the industry	4.4
Question 11	Ease of entry into management position for women	4.4
Question 12	Lack of career path development plans for women	5.4
Question 13	Lack of support for women	6.4
Question 14	Lack of mentoring opportunities	6.2
Question 15	Lack of training opportunities	7.5
Question 16	Gender stereotyping	5.4
Question 17	Gender discrimination in management positions	6.2
Question 18	"old boys" club	4.4
Question 19	Gender equality and empowerment of women	4.2
Question 20	Gender discrimination	5.4
Question 21	Fulfillment in current position	6.4
Question 22	Self-confidence as managers	6.4
Question 23	Job satisfaction/ expectations fulfilled	5.4
Question 24	Prospects of promotion to senior levels	4.4
Question 25	Gender equality/discrimination	6.25
Question 26	Pull her down (PHD) syndrome	5.8
Question 27	Success of policies and acceleration programs to advance women	6.4
Question 28	Behavioural changes of women once at management level	6.4
Question 29	Family/lifestyle implications for women advancement	6
Question 30	Gender discrimination and stigmas attached to women work commitment	6.4

According to Table 11 above the respondents perceive the petroleum industry as an industry of choice. The diagram, however also suggests that women in the industry lack support and mentoring opportunities. In the same breath the data above proposes that the petroleum industry is inundated with gender discrimination in management positions.

In addition, stigma attached to women commitment to their jobs is flagged as deterrent to women advancement in the petroleum industry. It is worth noting

that women within the petroleum industry are of the view that once at management levels women tend to behave differently.

Lastly, the majority (65.63%) of the respondents believed that prospects of a promotion were low.

5.2 Open-ended questions

The third section of the questionnaire contained open-ended questions which investigated the respondent's perception of women advancement within their organisation in the context of the petroleum industry. The open-ended questions also attempted to obtain respondent's recommendations with regards to what industry can do to change such perceptions in the endeavour to achieving significant levels of women participation in senior positions. The findings of which will be discussed below.

5.2.1 Question 31 of the questionnaire

This question "*why did you choose a career path in the petroleum industry*" sought to establish the degree to which career pathing was employed in the petroleum industry and to also establish whether the petroleum industry was an industry of choice for women.

The Figure 16 indicates that 62% of the respondents chose a career in the petroleum industry largely due to the vast opportunities, growth prospects and

career progression that presented itself in the industry. In addition, only 18% of the respondents joined the industry by chance and had no plan of joining the industry however largely due to their support type functional roles such as finance and human resources ended up in the petroleum industry.

Question 31: Why did you choose a career path in the petroleum industry?

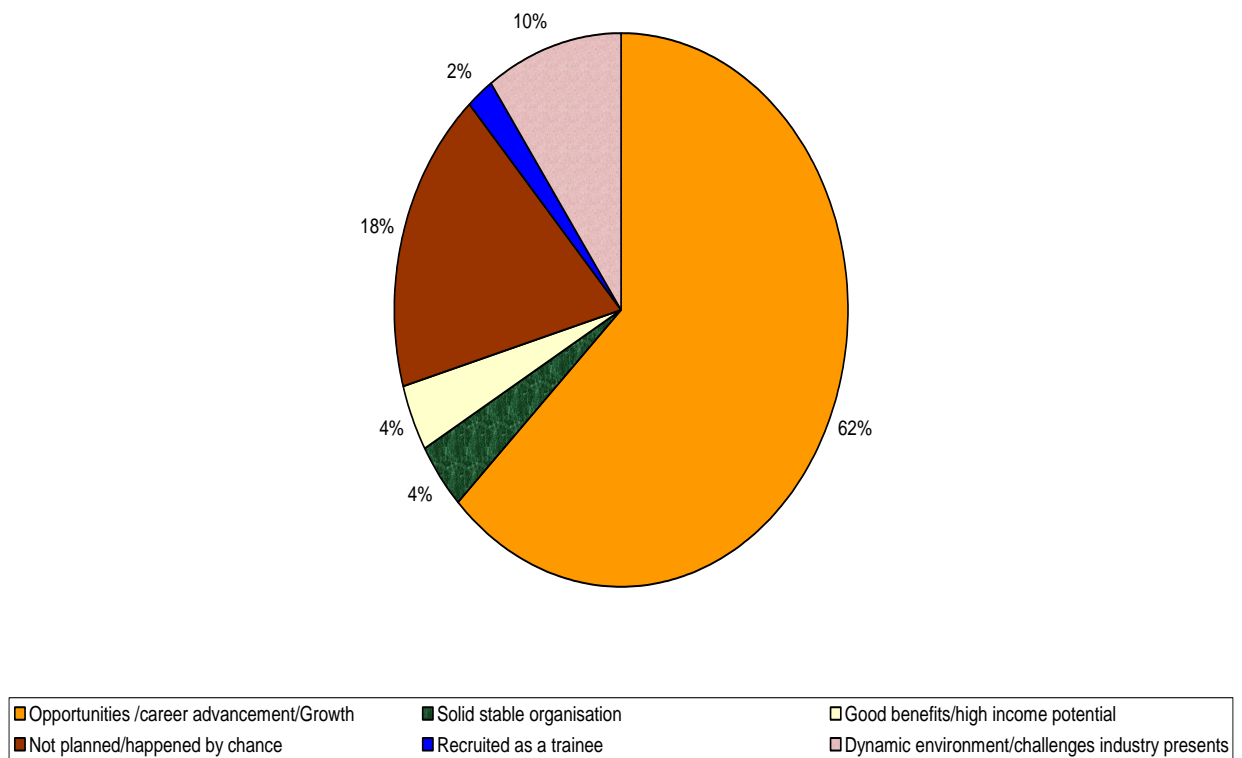


Figure 16: Reason for career choice

5.2.2 Question 32 of the questionnaire

This question “*what are the perceived barriers to women advancement in the petroleum industry*” endeavoured to solicit, explicitly so, the challenges

respondents identified within their environments that hampered women advancement in the petroleum industry.

According to Figure 17 below women within the petroleum industry largely attribute male domination, “old boys” club and the lack of being taken seriously as the main barriers for women advancement in the petroleum industry. Perceptions, stigmas and work life balance took second position in terms of barriers identified by respondents.

Question 32: Perceived barriers to women advancement in the petroleum industry

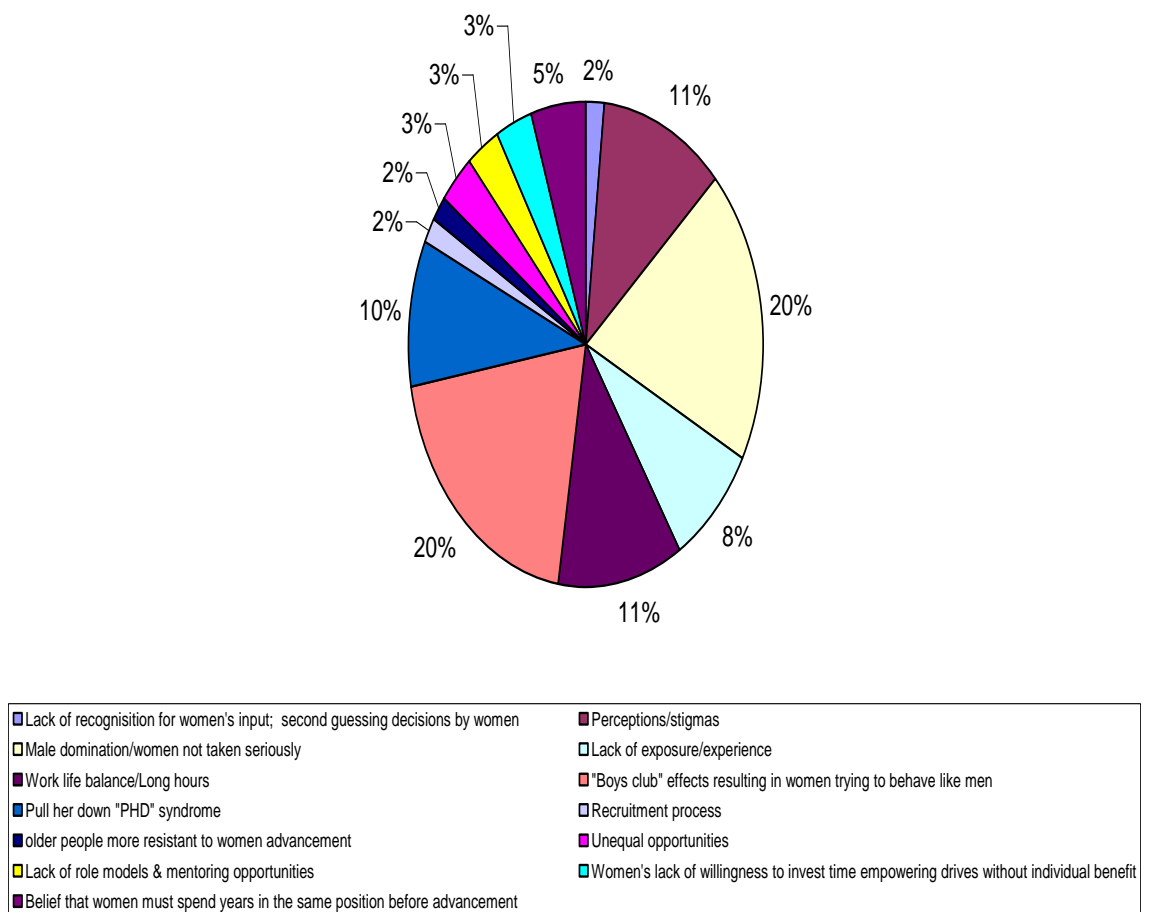


Figure 17: Perceived Barriers

The following themes/clusters were identified by respondents as the top five barriers to women advancement in the petroleum industry –

1. Male domination of petroleum industry
2. Women not being taken seriously
3. “Boys Club” effect
4. Work life balance/ Long hours
5. Perceptions and Stigmas

5.2.3 Question 33 of the questionnaire

This question “what can the petroleum industry do to advance women” sought to obtain recommendations from women within the petroleum industry regarding how the challenges identified in Question 32 can be addressed in the endeavour to ensuring that more women advance to senior positions.

According to the Figure 18 below, the majority (35%) of the women advocate that mentoring, coaching and accelerated training programs can assist women advancement in the petroleum industry. Mindset change and refraining from prejudices (23%) according to the respondents is another route to pursue in terms of advancing women in the petroleum industry.

Lack of senior management support and recognition of women potential in the work force came up as an additional barriers identified that the petroleum industry could address in order to achieve advancement of women.

Question 33: What can the petroleum industry do to advance women

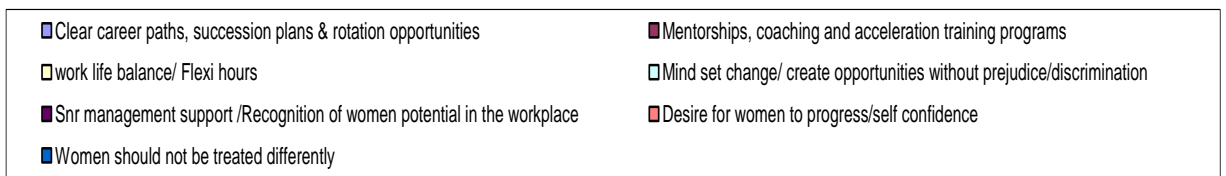
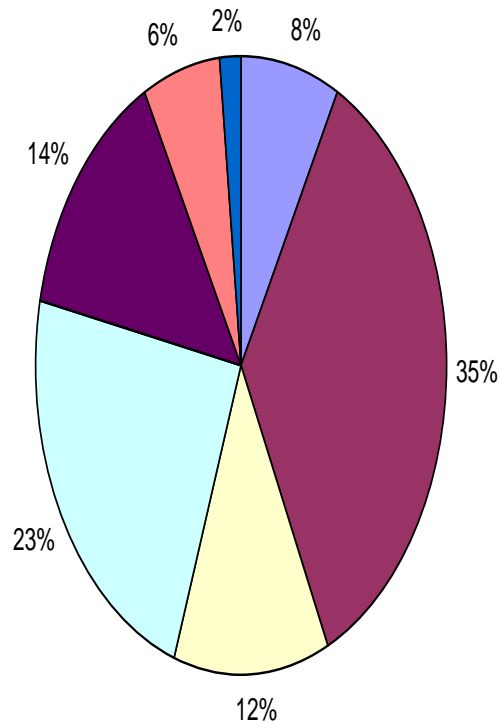


Figure 18: What the industry should do?

The following were the main themes identified as recommendations made with regard to women advancement –

1. Mentorship, coaching and accelerated training programs (35%)
2. Mind set change; creation of opportunities without prejudice (23%)

3. Senior management support, recognition of women potential in the workplace (14%)
4. Work life balance/ Flexi-hours (12%)
5. Clear career plans, succession plans (8%);
6. desire for women to progress (6%); and
7. Not treating women any differently to men (2%)

5.3 Summary

The results of the research have been presented. The results will now be discussed in the next chapter

6 CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter commenced with a description of the respondent population in terms of demographics: age, marital status, race, highest levels of qualification, child caring/family responsibilities, number of years in management and in the petroleum industry. The second part of the chapter illustrated women's perceptions regarding the petroleum industry in the form of closed and open-ended questions. This served as a platform to contextualising the findings and results of the research.

The findings and results were analysed in the sequence of the research questions, namely: whether there are barriers to entering management/senior positions, if so, what are there; what are the primary factors motivating women to consider advancing their careers in the petroleum industry were; whether women currently in management positions were satisfied with their career advancements; whether it was a good idea to enter the petroleum industry in hindsight; whether there are adequate measures in place to cater for women advancement given the male dominated feature of the petroleum industry; whether there are realistic career advancement options for women in the petroleum industry; and what are the perceived career paths for young females entering the petroleum industry?

6.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE POPULATION

6.2.1 Age

The age groups of the women ranged from 24-30 year age group to the 40-59 year age group. The majority (70%) of the respondents were in the 30-39 age group. Only 18.75% of women respondents were in the age group 40 to 59.

Considering that the initial implementation of the Employment Equity legislation took place in 1999, it was expected that the majority (68, 75%) of the respondents would be represented in the 30-39 age group. One can assume that the petroleum industry recognised the need to comply. However, the sample size was too small; therefore no assumptions could be made about the entire petroleum industry. Nevertheless, one can deduce that women have been placed on accelerated career development programs in the endeavour to achieving the Employment Equity targets.

6.2.2 Marital Status

The respondents were mainly single (49.75%); and mainly represented in the 1-3 and 4-6 years management experience. It can be deduced that women are putting marriage on hold and pursuing their careers in the early years of their careers. Lack of work-life balance is a factor which could be attributed to this trend. Long hours spent at work is another factor which can be recognized for this tendency of more single women on the LOE programme, as such more time would have to be spend at the office. In the same breath, it was evident that a high rate of married women is found in the 10+ years of management

experience. This could suggest that women have had to acquire years of industry experience before promotions to management levels.

The findings indicate that all the 24-30 age group respondents were single. In addition, the single status reduces as the management experience increases. This could suggest that as women begin to feel confident and comfortable in their management roles, beyond five years, they consider marriage and settling down.

Prevalent divorce rates were identified in the categories 1-3, 7-9 and 10+ years management experience. The divorce rates were lower in the 10+ years which could be attributed to support structures at home. One could also assume that married women with more management experience could have had their children earlier and no longer had child care responsibilities or had children that were at more independent ages.

Divorce rates appeared to be more prevalent in the 30-39 and 40-59 (see Figure 4) year age group. This could be attributed to the lack of work life balance and support for working women with child care and family responsibilities; and stress levels inherent in working twice as hard as men to prove their worth as indicated in Section 2 findings.

It is worth noting there were no divorced women in the 4-6 years management experience category. This could be attributed to the high single status of

respondents in that group. After three (3) years of management experience individuals tend to become confident in terms of deliverables and capabilities to perform tasks at hand. This reduces the levels of stress for women as they are more acquainted to what the job entails and have mastered the skill of performing their roles.

6.2.3 Race

Black women represented (65.63%) of the research; followed by white women (15.63%). The Indian and Coloured women each represented 9.38% of the respondents. This was coincidentally, representative of the South African racial statistics. According to the Statistics South Africa, the South African population by race is comprised of over 38 million Africans (79.5% of the total population). The white population is estimated at 4.3-million (9.2% of the total population). The Coloured population represents 4.2-million (8.9% of the total population). The Indian population is under 1.2-million (2.5% of the total population), (Stats SA, 2007).

Figure 13 suggests that the black respondents had the least management experience compared to other races. In addition, the white respondents had the most management experience compared to other races. Given the history of the country this did not come as a shock. It was only post 1994 that black women started receiving the recognition with regard to promotion to management experience.

6.2.4 Highest level of qualification

The literature review presented in Chapter 2 highlighted the importance of tertiary qualifications for women to advance to senior positions. Mathur-Helm (2004) suggested a Masters in Business Administrations (MBA), is a more appropriate qualifications required for promotion into managerial positions.

Mathur-Helm (2004) advocated that an MBA is a catalyst in the advancement of women into lower and middle level management (Adler, 1993, cited in Mathur-Helm (2004)), and an MBA has given women distinct advantages in South Africa too. The questionnaire however did not provide for clarity in terms of the masters degrees obtained by women. Nevertheless, by virtue of over 28% (see Figure 9) of the respondents indicating that they had a master's degree, one cannot rule out the importance of a post graduate qualification. The results further proved that women have identified the need to advance their qualifications (over 56% of the respondents had a post graduate degree).

The majority of the women respondents with a bachelor's degree represented over 87% of women in the 4-6 years management experience and above. In fact all the respondents in the 4-6 years management experience had a minimum bachelor's degree as a qualification. The results indicated that the higher the qualification of the respondents, the higher the women were in terms of management experience. Given the high level of qualifications of the women in the 4 years and above management experience; one can deduce that women regard a degree as a catalyst to their career progression within the petroleum

industry. This is further proved by the finding that women with diplomas were the least represented (9%) in the population.

6.2.5 Child caring responsibilities

The results indicate that the majority (59.38%) of the respondents had parental responsibilities. The majority of the respondents with parental responsibilities had over four (4) years management experience (refer to Figure 7). The findings also suggest that women only started having children once they at least had four years worth of management experience. Further indication, that women put marriage on hold in order to pursue their careers. This correlated with the fact that the majority (43.75%) of the respondents were single and opted to settle later on in their lives, once their careers had taken off.

6.2.6 Number of years in management

The majority of respondents (34.38%) were found in the 1-3 years management experience category, in line with the LOE criteria for admission to the program. The LOE targets women with at least three years working experience.

It is worth noting that the 4-6 years management experience category was (25%) comprised only of 30-39 years age group. This was expected as higher levels of maturity are expected at this level of management. In addition, the results came as no surprise indicating that the majority of women with over ten years of management experience were in the 40-59 age group as more experience was required at these levels of management. However, it is with

noting that the fact that the women have 10+ management experience does not suggest that they are all at senior management.

Lastly, Figure 15 indicates a positive correlation between the number of years spent in the industry and years in management. All the respondents with less experience within the petroleum industry had less years of management experience. This suggests that the longer one remains in the petroleum industry, the higher their chances of promotion. This was also suggested in the open-ended questions as barrier for women climbing up the corporate ladder.

6.2.7 Summary of Findings on the respondent populations

The significant finding from the analysis of the information of this group of female managers was that the minimum qualification of the respondents was a diploma, which accounted for 12.5% of the respondents. The rest of the respondents had a basic undergrad degree. The post graduate qualifications were relatively high (56.25%), an indication that the women within the industry put high emphasis on education. One can further deduce that this is an indication that qualifications could be perceived as catalyst to career advancement. It would be fascinating to juxtapose this finding against their male counterparts in management.

Further findings indicated that divorce rates were prevalent in the women in the 1-3, 7-9 and 10+ management experience. None of the respondents with 4-6 year management experience were divorced. In addition, women with 1-3 and

10+ years management had the highest levels of child care responsibilities; with the least reported child care responsibilities in the 4-6 years management experience. Divorce rates were prevalent in the 30-39 and 40-59 age groups. All the 24-30 age group respondents were single.

The population description provides a base for the context within which the questions were answered. The next section looks at the results and findings of Section 2 (closed-ended questions) and Section 3 (open-ended questions).

6.3 Perception described by respondents

This section of the document interpreted the respondents' industry perception with regard to women advancement to senior and management positions. Table 10 in Chapter 5 will be referred to continuously in terms of findings and results of responses to Section 2 of the Questionnaire.

6.3.1 Career path and choice of industry

The respondent's intended career path was determined using Question 9, 12 and 24 of the questionnaire for female managers/respondents. Over 75% (40.6% of which strongly agreeing) of the respondents overwhelmingly agreed to having had a career path prior to entering the industry. However, 25% of the respondents indicated that there was no clear career path and that they landed in the petroleum industry by chance. In addition, 34% of the respondents believed their chances of being promoted were high. An alarming 65% of the respondents did not believe they stood a good chance of a promotion to senior

levels.

This suggested that there were barriers to taking up management positions. Given the fact that the majority of the respondents were in the 30-39 year age group and 1-3 years management experience category, one can deduce that most who aspire to advance their careers to senior management levels had not been equipped with clear career path plans to expedite their promotions process.

Figure 16 suggested that the respondents perceived the petroleum industry as an industry of choice, contrary to views held by the Women in Energy (WOESA). WOESA (2005) is of the view that women are not enticed to develop their careers in the energy sector due to its male domination and lack of women advancement. Yet the findings indicate an over-whelming 62% of the respondents chose the petroleum industry due to career advancement opportunities and growth prospects.

6.3.2 Perceived gender equality/discrimination and Employment equity within the petroleum industry

The perceived gender equality and employment equity within the petroleum industry was measured using Questions 10, 11, 12 and 25. Over 78% of the respondents perceived their organisations not to have good representation of women at management and senior levels. In addition, over 71% of the respondents indicated that women and men did not have equal opportunities in

terms of career advancement. This could be attributed to the male domination, “old boys club” and women not being taken seriously, highlighted by respondents in the open-ended section of the questionnaire. In addition, 91% of the respondents were of the view that it is not easy to enter management positions in their organisations.

6.3.3 Ease of entry into management position for women

The respondents’ perception of ease of entry into management position for women was determined using Questions 11 and 24. The majority (90.63%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement that it was easy for women to enter into a management positions at their organizations. Only 9.38% respondents agreed that it was easy for women. The respondents indicated that women not being taken seriously, male domination and gender stereo typing as main motive behind this.

In addition, 65% of the respondents vehemently disagree that they had prospects of promotion to a more senior position; while 34% believed they stood a chance to promotion into a more senior position. Given the strong perception that older people are more resistant to women advancement highlighted in the open-ended section of the Question; this could be attributed to the fact that the majority (68.75%) of the respondents fell into the 30-39 age group category.

The 30-39 age group is a relatively young group and this could be perceived as a stumbling block to their career advancement. It was also highlighted that for

one to receive a promotion within the industry one must have had substantial industry experience. All these factors combined with the fact that this was a highly specialized industry one can deduce the prospect of promotion for the younger females was unlikely.

6.3.4 Lack of support for women

The perceived support for women was measured using Questions 13 and 19. In addition, 59% of the respondents disagreed that there was adequate support for women within the petroleum industry to enable proper advancement of their careers. In support of this perception, Question 19 highlighted a majority (78.13%) response by respondents concurred that over the years, women found it difficult to climb up the corporate ladder. The responses further support gender inequality alluded to above.

Sherk (2004, p. 2) proposed that women at senior positions found that they had “a small female peer group at those levels, and often experienced isolation and lack support from a peer network”. This in turn prevented women from instigating major change in the organizations at the senior level.

6.3.5 Lack of mentoring opportunities

Question 14 of the Questionnaire probed perceptions held by women regarding mentoring opportunities available for women. In addition, 65.63% of the respondents agreed that women within the petroleum industry did not have adequate mentoring opportunities. This can be attributed to the fact that the

petroleum industry had historically been male dominated as a result there were few women at management and senior levels.

This argument can also be used in support of lack of support for women discussed in Section 6.3.4, as this was also indicative of the scarcity of women at senior levels which results in women at the top levels of organisation having no networking opportunities and support structures to discuss issues faced by women within the industry. This further exacerbates the lack of role models for younger female managers entering the petroleum industry.

Lastly, it is worth noting that while mentorship programs might exist for women in a lot of the oil companies, such opportunities might not be as easily accessible or adequately communicated to young women.

6.3.6 Lack of training opportunities

The professional barriers to management and senior positions with regard to lack of training opportunities were tested using Question 15. While 56.25% of the respondents disagree there is a lack of training opportunities for women; 43.75% of the respondents agree that there is a lack of training opportunities. This discrepancy may be explained by the proposition that levels of training required by women tend to be on the upper end such as an MBA; which most organizations put stringent processes in place for the approval of such studies.

Considering the finding that 56.23% of the respondents had a post graduate

degree, one can deduce that the training sought by the women in the petroleum industry is more business orientated to allow further development in terms of their careers. A proposition is made that the level of training provided could be at entry levels, such as Microsoft, project management type training. Therefore, the level of training provided was not relevant for women at management levels within the petroleum industry.

6.3.7 Gender stereotyping

Questions 16, 17 and 31 tested opinions on the psychological barriers to women advancing to senior positions. The findings indicate that 62% of the respondents disagree that women are better suited to management than engineering positions. This suggests that women do not believe in the gender “boxing” of women to particular jobs as they can easily adapt to the so-called male dominated. In addition, 62.5% of the respondents believe that there is a perception amongst their male colleagues that women are not better suited to management positions. Over 78% of the respondents perceive that women have to work twice as hard as their male counterparts to obtain recognition/promotions.

6.3.8 “Old boys club”

Question 18 was used to measure the perception of the “old boys club” prevalence within the petroleum industry. The findings indicated that 65.63% respondents did not perceive the “old boys club” common in the petroleum industry. Only 34.38% of the respondents agreed to the prevalence of the “old

boys club” in the industry. Given the male dominance of the industry, this finding came as a shock. The effects of a male-dominated society where women feel excluded was therefore not perceived as a major reason to why women do not advance to senior positions. In addition, this finding contradicted the findings in Question 32 that highlights “old boys club” phenomenon as one the top five barriers to women’s career advancement.

6.3.9 Fulfilment in current position

Questions 21 and 23 sought to assess respondents’ fulfillment in current positions and whether their expectations were fulfilled in terms of management role. The perception regarding whether expectations are met, are almost divided equally. The majority (over 50%) of the respondent disagree with being fulfilled at current positions. However 56.25% of the respondents indicated that they are not happy / fulfilled as managers.

Given the almost equal split one cannot come to a conclusive decision regarding the respondents’ positions regarding the petroleum industry as a whole. It appears fulfillment in current positions is environment specific and will differ from one oil company to the rest.

6.3.10 Pull her down (PHD) syndrome

Perceptions regarding the PHD syndrome were assessed using Questions 26 and 28. Respondents seemed divided regarding the PHD syndrome with 53.13% of the respondents disagreeing to the prevalence of women pulling

other women down once at the top. However, 40.63% of the respondents agreed that the PHD was prevalent within the petroleum industry. Once again one cannot make a conclusive statement to this regard in terms of the petroleum industry as the perceptions are divided. However, given the fact that responses slant towards disagreement to the PHD prevalence, one can still deduce that there are elements of the PHD syndrome in the petroleum industry perhaps not as prevalent as in other industries.

6.3.11 Family/lifestyle implications for women advancement

Question 29 sought to assess work-life balance implication perception of the respondents. The findings suggest that 59.38% of the respondent disagree that work-life balance is factor contributing to women not being promoted. On the other hand, 34.38% of respondents agreed that work-life balance was a challenge women faced. This suggested that work-life balance could not be completely ruled out as a factor that contributed to women not advancing to management levels in the petroleum industry.

6.4 Barriers to women in the petroleum industry

6.4.1 Professional Barriers

6.4.1.1 Advancement Opportunities

Results alluded to above tended to support Hargon (1989), Kanter (1977), Maskell-Pretz and Hopkins (1997), cited in Gertzen (2006), views that females often received differential treatment in the workplace. This was supported by the

gender inequality and gender stigma perceptions identified above.

The results further supported Sherk's (2004) observation that to gain respect and promotions, oil and gas professionals had to have adequate experience in the field, and a full understanding of the technical components of the entire value chain. This was evidenced in the high qualification levels of respondents and the concern regarding lack of training opportunities for women. The lack of training as indicated above could be pertaining more business orientated training which would focus more on the technical aspects of the business.

6.4.1.2 Mentoring Opportunities

The findings further supported the views of Fargenson (1988), cited in Gertzer (2006), that mentoring networks were mainly embedded in social gatherings (for example the golf course). As a result many women did not gain from its benefits as more often than not there were family responsibilities to attend to during the times allocated for such gatherings. There is a perception amongst the respondents there is a lack of mentoring within the petroleum industry. It was also mentioned that this might be a case of ease of access to such programs which might be the challenge and inadequate communication regarding mentoring opportunities to those newly appointed to management levels.

6.4.1.3 Barriers to Networking for women

Given the history of the petroleum industry, it is not surprising that there were few female leaders in the industry. Sherk (2004, p. 2) explains that women

working at senior professional levels in the petroleum industry often found they had a very small female peer group, if they has one at all, and often experienced isolation and lack of support from a peer network” . Sherk suggested that the small numbers in which women found themselves in the petroleum industry prevented them from initiating radical and noteworthy organizational change at senior executive level.

The research findings concur with Sherks findings and suggested that the South African petroleum industry was no different to the Australian one to this regard as less women role models are found in the more senior levels, who would provide pointers to young women entering management levels.

The research findings supported the analysis by Linehan *et al.* (2001), cited in Tonge (2008), that recruitment and selection processes was another barrier associated with working in male-dominated industries and sectors. Recruitment process was sighted as a barrier to women advancement within the South African petroleum industry. This further indicated that despite policies and regulations in place, women were still to reap the rewards of such legislation.

Tonge (2008) also highlighted the role of time and family responsibilities as a further barrier. Elements of work-life balance as a barrier to women advancement were identified as perception that exists among women managers within the petroleum industry.

In addition, elements of “old boys club” effect were also perceived by women to being a hindrance to women advancement in the petroleum industry.

6.4.1.4 Training opportunities

The research findings concurred with the views of Mathur-Helm (2004) that women paced themselves in terms of improving their qualifications in order to advance their careers. But still statistics indicate lower levels of women participation in senior positions. Only 25% of the respondents had 10+ years management experience, and this does not in any way suggest that they were all at senior levels as the questionnaire did not request a breakdown in terms of level of management and time it took to get those levels.

Mathur-Helm (2004) argued that qualified women with university degrees and postgraduate qualification still faced difficulties in obtaining employment and subsequently advancing into senior positions in corporate jobs. This was observed in the research findings. Over 56% of respondents had a post-graduate degree (21.88% of which was a doctorate degree).

The research further supported Mathur-Helm’s (2004) view that affirmative action had only allowed women entry into jobs however had not determined their progress into senior positions. The majority (34.38%) of the respondents fell in the 1-3 years management experience bracket.

6.4.1.5 The “Old Boys” Club mindset

The research finding suggested lower levels of “old boys club” prevalence within the petroleum industry. The findings indicated that 65.63% respondents did not perceive the “old boys club” common in the petroleum industry. Only 34.38% of respondents perceived there to being the prevalence of the “old boys club” in the industry. Given the male dominated environment the petroleum industry operates, this came as a surprise. However, contrary to findings in the closed-ended questions, the open-ended questions suggested the “old boys club” was one of the top five barriers to women advancement in the petroleum industry. Having said that, once can deduce that there are element of this phenomenon in the industry which need to be addressed.

Gertzen (2006) explained that informal networking played a crucial role in advancement opportunities in most organisations. Such networks facilitate the exchange of information, career planning and strategy, professional support and encouragement, as well as increased visibility in the business (Gertzen, 2006). Prevalence of this phenomenon within the petroleum industry would certainly disadvantage women from advancing to more senior positions as they would not be privy to such networks.

Cooper Jackson ((2001, p. 32), Gatta & Mckay (2003, p. 10) and Smith (2003, p. 24), cited in Gertzen (2006), explained that “Old boys clubs” were longstanding tradition in most male dominated organisations, especially those in the areas of science and technology. As a result of these “old boys clubs” women were

excluded from meetings, information sharing and important decision making sessions. As a result, women did not receive the same opportunities as their male counterparts in terms of information sharing, career path planning, mentoring opportunities and professional support (Gertzen, 2006).

Given the high ranking “old boys club” phenomenon received in the open-ended questions, prevalence thereof in the petroleum industry can therefore not be entirely excluded.

6.4.2 Psychological Barriers

6.4.2.1 Work-Life Balance

Sprunt (2006) argued that work-life balance is important to women in the petroleum industry, highlighting the fact that flexible working arrangements including part-time work and tele-communicating could help retain women within the industry. The research findings concurred with Sprunt’s view as work-life balance was rated by 12% of the respondents as a recommendation for the petroleum industry to actively pursue and address in the endeavour to advancing women to senior positions.

It is worth noting that most of the oil companies as confirmed with SAPIA do promote work-life balance however the reality thereof for most women remained a myth.

6.4.2.2 Gender discrimination

Cassell (1997) explained that regardless of equal opportunities legislation that had been put in place, Wilson (1989), (cited in Cassell, 1997), advocated that the notion that equal opportunity now existed for women was but a legend. The research findings concurred with Cassell (1997) indicating that just as in the UK there seemed to be significant disillusionment about the lack of women advancement into management positions in South African.

The majority (78%) of the respondents agreed that legislation had done little to redress the more roundabout forms of discrimination as by their very nature they did not appear discriminatory rather as part of normal everyday working trends (Cassell, 1997). This was further evidenced in the research findings that respondents perceived their organisations not to have equal opportunities in terms of career advancement and the reality that women had to work twice as hard as their male counterparts prior to any promotions.

6.4.2.3 Gender Stereotyping

According to Cornerlly *et al.* (2008) a recent review of research on gender and leadership roles supported for “role congruity theory” which suggested that two forms of prejudice advocated by Eagly and Karau, 2002 (cited in Strauss, 2008) are the result of the perceived inappropriateness of the female role and leadership roles . These two forms of prejudice include:

- perceiving women less favourably than men in leadership roles; and

- evaluating women's behaviour while in the leader role less favourably compared to men in the same role.

Cornelly *et al.* (2008, p. 303) explained that men were preferred for “male sex-typed jobs and that women were preferred for female sex-typed jobs”. Powell *et al.* (2002), cited in Cornelly *et al.* (2008), suggested in their research that both men and women perceived a good manager to be more masculine in nature. Therefore, advocating that women appear to be “buying into” the “think manager-think male” phenomenon (Cornelly *et al.*, 2008).

The research findings concurred with the views of Cornelly *et al.* (2008, p. 303) in that the women had to work twice as hard as their male counterparts to be promoted. In addition, the research findings in the open-ended questions highlighted that women not being taken seriously in their organization is one of the top five barriers to women advancement identified, which results in feeling women disgruntled.

The research findings further suggested that women were perceived less favorable for management roles. Furthermore, the research findings suggested that once at leadership positions, women tended to behave differently. The open-ended question suggested that this was largely due to the “old boys club” which forced women to behave like men losing their femininity in the endeavor to proving a point to the male counterparts that women are just as competent and tough. The research findings did not however yield any feedback with

regard to whether women's behaviour, while in the leader roles, was less favourably compared to men in the same role. Perhaps this is an area for further research/investigation.

6.4.2.4 CONCLUSION

This Chapter comprised the data analysis, results and findings for the seven research questions and insights obtained during the process of the research. The next chapter draws conclusions based on findings.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Introduction

Since the early 90's gender equality in South Africa took centre stage resulting in the increased number of women entering previously male dominated industries such the petroleum industry. In spite of government legislation to fast track gender equality and employment equity, women remain under represented at management and senior levels across industries.

In the endeavor to addressing diversity challenges and women advancement within the petroleum industry, SAPIA initiated the LOE program whose success still remains a mystery. Women representation at management and senior levels in the South African petroleum industry still leave a lot to be desired.

If gender equality was to be achieved in the petroleum industry, the success of such initiatives by industry had to be monitored and interrogated on an on-going basis, career paths had to be adhered to and the overall mindset of men regarding women managers had to change.

7.2 Meeting the research objectives of the study

An investigation into challenges faced by women with regard to career advancement within the petroleum industry was undertaken, as identified in the literature, yielded the following barriers:

- Lack of advancement Opportunities

- Lack of mentoring Opportunities
- Barriers to Networking for women
- Lack of training opportunities
- The “Old Boys” Club mindset
- Lack of Work-Life Balance
- Gender discrimination
- Gender Stereotyping

Despite these barriers, literature indicated that in the endeavor to advancing their careers women upgraded their qualification and attempted to improve their industry knowledge in the endeavor to cracking it in the industry.

The 2007 Workforce profile of the petroleum industry published by the SAPIA in the SAPIA 2008 Annual Report indicated that 6% females held top management levels in the industry employment statistics. Whereas only 19% of the senior management positions were filled by women; 27% of specialist and mid-management positions were filled by women. It is therefore evident that women were still battling to make their mark in terms of career advancement within the petroleum industry.

When asked what the main barriers to women advancement in the petroleum industry were, the women identified the following as the largest barriers to women advancement in the petroleum industry: male domination of petroleum industry; women not being taken seriously; “boys club” effect; work life balance challenges/ long hours and perceptions and stigmas.

The women suggested the following key recommendations to ensuring women advancement in the petroleum industry, in order of importance:

- Mentorship, coaching and accelerated training programs
- Mind set change; creation of opportunities without prejudice
- Senior management support, recognition of women potential in the workplace
- Work life balance/ Flexi-hours
- Clear career plans, succession plans
- desire for women to progress ; and
- Not treating women any differently to men

7.3 Women and Business

China, the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States of America (USA) are some of the countries that have developed gender equality legislation (similar to that of South Africa) which have over the past ten years yielded insignificant results.

In the same breath, despite the supportive legislation and majority representation in the population, women remained at the lowest ranking positions.

The findings of the research supported Mathur-Helm's (2004, p. 57) view that

the “social and cultural assumptions used as management strategies continuously created barriers to women’s employment, growth and development”; which exacerbated the challenge of integrating women into the mainstream management. In support of Mathur-Helm (2004, p. 57), the research findings also indicated that women remained “under-utilised in the South African employment market and are a wasted resource”.

As can be seen from the literature and research findings, gender inequality still prevailed despite attempts by women to up their game in terms of career advancement. The South African dynamics are no different from the global ones as more women tended to be stereo-typed/boxed into specific occupations.

7.4 Recommendations

The following recommendation are made regarding women advancement in the petroleum industry –

- Development, execution and adherence to career paths/development plans for women. Most of the individual oil companies have put in place adequate career development plans for all individuals however the adherence thereof is a challenge. Career pathing of women should take centre stage and executive management must view career pathing of women as an imperative for the industry transformation and should not only pay lip service to this regard but must also act in a manner that suggests it.

- The LOE programme must be revised to allow integration with the respective oil companies to ensure that development plans progress and that the women obtain proper support. Although, it must be highlighted that policing thereof will be a challenge as SAPIA cannot enforce any punitive measures to non-compliant oil companies.
- Individual oil companies must identify additional mentorship opportunities and more prominent role models for young females joining the industry. These must be adequately communicated and proper structures to facilitate such initiatives must be put in place.
- Work-life balance remains a thorny issue. In as much there are policies in place women find themselves falling into the trap of proving themselves to their counterparts; and end up not taking up the flexi-hours options allowed. Senior management needs to take an active role in ensuring that women do not fall into this trap and encourage women to take up flexi-hours options that work for them. In addition, management must create an environment that will not deliberately exclude women in forums as a result of the flexi work hours agreed upon with the individual. Senior managers must foster that no meetings take place in the absence of anyone on flexi-hours schemes and must accommodate such individuals using the technology at our disposal

- Industry must actively encourage an environment where women are treated equal to their male counterparts.

The findings and recommendation of this research concurred with the view of Sherk's (2004) that a corporate culture that recognised the value of and capitalised on its total human resources is an imperative which the petroleum industry needed to adopt and embrace. In order to achieve this, the petroleum industry had to move away from mediocre initiatives that yielded trivial results.

This entails the use of strategies that encouraged women participation and diversity management initiatives that addressed gender related matters and tackled barriers to women participation across the value chain. An example of this is the development of company subsidized child care facilities within the company premises or surroundings.

Lastly, petroleum related university programs such as petroleum/chemical engineering, petroleum economics, geology and geophysics targeting females at high school level is one other initiative that could increase female participation in the industry and would provide women with knowledge that will empower them to become more confident in the male dominated industry.

7.5 Areas for further research

The findings of this study have revealed some interesting facts about the petroleum industry. However this research did not provide/indicate a break down of the levels of management the respondents were at and how long it took them to get to those management levels.

In addition, although SAPIA reports on the workforce profile of the industry, it however does not indicate where the majority of the women are clustered (engineering, support, sales or service roles). The female labour force participation in the South African petroleum industry is not well documented and remains a grey area warranting further research.

Lastly, in as much as the research attempted to obtain perceptions from women managers within the industry, it is imperative that this study be repeated on a larger sample of women at all levels, without focusing purely on managers. This will allow for further investigation into challenges experienced by women at lower levels that impede women progression to management levels. The problems at management levels could be as a result of challenges faced by women at entry levels which cascades to the women at higher-ranking levels.

7.6 Concluding remarks

This research achieved the primary objective detailed in Chapter 1 by establishing the challenges faced by women in the petroleum industry with regard to career advancement. In addition to the barriers identified to this regard a set of recommendations have been made by women managers within the industry to how the petroleum industry could address the barriers identified.

It is anticipated that this research has contributed to ultimate triumph in the enduring battle for recognition and acceptance of women in the petroleum industry and will help retain their skills within the industry.

REFERENCES

Banda-Hansmann, A. 2008. The Petroleum Professional. An industry Human Resources Development Journal. Issue 1 August 2008 [internet]. Cape Town: South African Petroleum Industry. Available from http://www.sapia.co.za/hrd/files/The_Petroleum_Professional_Spring_2008.pdf (accessed 03/10/2009).

Banda-Hansmann, A. 2009. The Petroleum Professional Spring 2009. An industry Human Resources Development Journal. Issue 2 [internet]. Cape Town: South African Petroleum Industry. Available from http://www.sapia.co.za/hrd/files/The_Petroleum_Professional_Spring_2009.pdf (accessed 21/10/2009).

Burke R. J.; Matthiesen S. B; Einarsen S; Fiskerbaun, L & Soiland, V. (2007) Gender differences in work experiences and satisfaction on Norwegian oil rig workers. *Gender in Management: An international Journal* 23(2), 137-147.

Burke, R.J.; Koyuncu, M. & Fiksenbaum, L. (2008) Still a man's world. Implications for managerial and professional women in a Turkish bank. *Gender in Management: An international Journal*. 23(4), 278-290.

Burke, R. J. & Mattis, M. (2005) Supporting Women's career Advancement: Challenges and Opportunities. *Management International Digest Journal*, 14(4),

Cassell, C. (1997) The business case for equal opportunities: implications for women in management. *Women in Management Review Journal*, 12(1), 11–16.

Commission on Gender Equality (1999), available at: www.cge.org.za

Commission on Gender Equality (2001), available at: www.cge.org.za

Connerley, M.L. & Mecham, R.L. & Strauss, J.P. (2008) Gender differences in leadership competencies, expatriate readiness and performance. *Gender in Management: An international Journal* 23(5), 300-316.

Davidson, J. M. & Cooper, C. L. (1984) She needs a wife: problems of women managers. *Leadership and Organisation Development Journal*, 5(3), 2-30.

Eade, D. M. (2007) Women and Leadership Positions. [online]. Available from <http://adv-leadership-grp.com/blog/2007/06/04/women-and-leadership-positions> (Accessed 2009-09-14).

Gertzen, C. (2006) *Women Engineers in Eskom: Moving Careers from Technical to Management*. Unpublished MBA Dissertation, University of Pretoria.

Maskell-Pretz, M. & Hopkins, W. E. (1997) Women in engineering: Toward a barrier-free environment. *Journal of Management in Engineering*, 13(1), 32-37.

Mathur-Helm, B. 2005. Equal opportunity for South African women: a benefit or barrier. *Women in Management Review Journal* 20(1), 56-71.

Morrison, A.M. 1992, 'New solutions to the same old glass ceiling', *Women in Management Review Journal*, 7(4), 15-20.

MBendi Information Services, 2009. Oil and Gas in South Africa [internet]. Available from <http://www.mbendi.com/indy/oilg/af/sa/p0005.htm> (accessed 22/07/09).

National Gender Policy Framework (2003), *Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality*, National Gender Policy Framework, Pretoria.

Noble, C. & Moore, S. 2006. Advancing women and leadership in this post feminist, post EEO era. A discussion of the issues. *Women in Management Review* Vol. 21 No. 7, 2006 pp 598-603. Emerald Group Publishing Limited

Petroleum Products Amendment Act, 2003 (Act No. 58 of 2003). The South African Petroleum and Liquid Fuels Industry Charter (pp 200-25)

Porterfield, J. & Kleiner, B.H. 2005. A New Era: Women and Leadership. Equal Opportunities International. *Management Review Journal*, 24(5), 49-56

Powell, G. 1998. *Women and Men in management*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage

Rosin, M. H. & Korabik, K. 1992. Corporate Flight of women managers: Moving from Friction to Fact. *Women in Management Review Journal*, 7(3)

South African Petroleum Industry. 2009 SAPIA Annual Report 2008. [internet] Available from <http://www.sapia.co.za/pdf/2008-Sapia-AR.pdf> (accessed 02/08/2009).

Schwartz, F. N. 1992.a Breaking with tradition: Women and work, the new facts of life. New York: Time Warner.

Schwartz, F. N. 1992.b Women as a business imperative. *Harvard Business Review Publishing*, 70 (2), 105–109

Sherk, S. 2004. Women in Canada's Oil and Gas Sector. AGRA Earth and Environmental Ltd. St. John's, Newfoundland. <http://www.mun.ca/cwse/Sherk,Susan.pdf> (accessed: 14/09/09)

Smith, R. 2003. Investigating barriers to managerial positions for women in information and communication technology. Unpublished MBA dissertation. University of Pretoria

South Africa. 1998. Employment Equity Act, 1998 (Act No 55 of 1998). Pretoria: Government Printers

South African Department of Labour. 2004. Employment equity Analysis Report 2004 [internet]. Available from http://www.labour.gov.za/useful_docs_doc_display.jsp?id=10295. (Accessed: 14/09/09)

Sprunt, E.S. 2006. Retaining Women in the Oil and Gas Industry. Society of Petroleum Engineers [internet]. Available from <http://www.spe.org/spe-site/spe/spe/tt/vol2/no2/5FeatureWomen.pdf>. (accessed: 14/09/09)

Sprunt, E.S; Simon, M.; Thorness, S.; Hughes, B. & Paul Musson. (2009) Increasing and Enhancing the Supply of Petroleum Industry Talent . [internet]. Available from http://www.spe.org/jpt/print/archives/2009/01/JPT2009_01_17TalentTech.pdf. (accessed 14/09/09).

Statistics South Africa Mid-year population estimates, South Africa: 2007 <http://www.statssa.gov.za/PublicationsHTML/P03022007/html/P03022007.htm>

Still, L.V. 2006. Where are the women in leadership in Australia? *Women in Management Review*, 21(3), 180-194.

Tonge, J.. 2008. Barriers to networking for women in a UK profession service. *Gender in Management: An international Journal*. 23 (7), 484-505

Valian, V. 2000. Why so slow?: The Advancement of women. Cambridge, M.A: MIT Press

Waring, M & Fouche, C. 2008. Book Review: Managing Mayhem: Work-life balance in New Zealand. Emerald Journal. Wellington Publishing. Dunmore. Vol. 23 No. 4. pp 264.

Women in Energy. (2005). Professional Women in Energy Forum Report [internet]. Johannesburg: WOESA. Available from http://www.woesa.com/downloads_pdf/PWE%20Forum%20-%20more.pdf. (accessed 16/09/2009).

Zigmund, W.G (2003) Business Research Methods: 7th Edition South-Western Cengage Learning. Ohio, USA

APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MANAGERS

Dear Respondent,

Career advancement for women in South Africa has taken centre stage with the government championing this initiative. However, despite existing legislation in country women are yet to enjoy the full benefits of advancing to senior positions.

The Liquid Fuels and Petroleum Charter was the first Charter to be signed by industry. The main objective of the Charter was to facilitate the transformation of the industry and to improve participation by historically disadvantaged South Africans in the industry, focusing, amongst others, employment equity and capacity building. The set 25% target by 2010 is no where near implementation. In particular, women participation in leadership/management within the industry is moving at a snails pace.

I am currently investigating challenges that women face in the petroleum industry with regard to their career advancement as part of the requirements of a Master of Business Administration degree at the Gordon Institute of Business Science.

My research report is titled:

Women in business - an assessment of challenges facing women in the South African petroleum industry

Please take 5 minutes to complete the following questionnaire. The questionnaire contains statements relating to women in management positions within the petroleum industry. Please respond to the questions in the context of your current organisation and perceptions that exist in the petroleum industry.

Please **complete all 3 sections (34 questions in total)** in the questionnaire regarding your views and perceptions of the industry. There are no right or wrong answers! All responses will be treated confidentially. Please save this document on your PC, and send back the completed Questionnaire to masego.sephoti@gmail.com or submit it to leigh@infochoice.co.za by **Friday, 07 October 2009**.

Thank you for your valuable time and your willingness to participate.

Regards,

Masego Sephoti



For further clarity kindly contact me on the number below

Masego Sephoti

Contact No. : 082 768 0014

E-mail: masego.sephoti@gmail.com

Please select your choice by marking the appropriate block with an X

SECTION 1	
1. Age	
24-30	<input type="checkbox"/>
30-39	<input type="checkbox"/>
40-59	<input type="checkbox"/>
50+	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Marital Status	
Married	<input type="checkbox"/>
Single	<input type="checkbox"/>
Co-habiting	<input type="checkbox"/>
Divorced	<input type="checkbox"/>
Widow	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Race	
Black	<input type="checkbox"/>
Indian	<input type="checkbox"/>
White	<input type="checkbox"/>
Coloured	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. What is your highest level of Qualification?	
Matric	<input type="checkbox"/>
Diploma	<input type="checkbox"/>
Undergraduate Degree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Post Graduate Degree	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Do you have a care-giving responsibility towards children at home (parent/guardian)?	
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>



6. Highest Qualification	
Grade 12 / Standard 10 or equivalent	
National Diploma	
Bachelor's Degree	
Honours Degree	
Masters Degree	
Doctorate	

7. How long have been in management?	
1-3 years	
4-6 years	
7-9 years	
10+ years	

8. How long have you been employed within the petroleum industry	
1-3 years	
4-6 years	
7-9 years	
10+ years	



SECTION 2:

Please select your choice by marking the appropriate block with an X

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Not Applicable
9. Before entering my current management position, I had a clear career path.					
10. My organisation has a good representation of women in management/senior positions.					
11. In my organisation, it is easier to enter management positions.					
12. My organisation has set clear guidelines in terms of my career development.					
13. Women in my organisation do not have adequate support to enable proper advancement.					
14. There is a lack of mentoring opportunities for women in my organisation.					
15. There is a lack of training opportunities for women in the industry.					
16. Women are better suited to management than to engineering.					
17. There is a perception amongst my male colleagues that women are not better suited to management positions.					
18. The "old boys' club" is less prevalent in management positions.					
19. Over the years, women in my organisation have found it easy to climb up the corporate ladder.					
20. Gender discrimination is less prevalent in my organisation					
21. I am happy/fulfilled as a manager.					
22. I am more self-confident as a manager because of the support structures in place within my organisation.					
23. My career as a manager meets the expectations I had when entering the position.					
24. My prospects of promotion into a more senior management position are high					
25. Women and men in my organisation are given equal opportunities in terms of career advancement					
26. Once at management/senior positions, women hamper/block the advancement of other women					
27. My organisation has put in place policies and initiated programs to address inequalities in the workplace which are working well					
28. Women behave differently once they get to management positions					
29. The reason women do not get promoted to senior positions is because of family/mother responsibilities					
30. Women in my organisation have to work twice as hard as their male counterparts to obtain recognition/promotions					

SECTION 3: Please respond in your own words (approx. 3 sentences):

31. In your own words, why did you choose a career path in this industry?

32. What barriers do you perceive to hamper/obstruct women advancement in the petroleum industry – considering the challenges in your organisation

33. What can be done by industry/my organisation to advance the opportunities of women to more senior positions

Thank you for taking time to assist with this survey. Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

Sephoti Masego

