

Gordon Institute of Business Science

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Sponsorship: An enabler to advancing women in law firms

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ABSTRACT

Despite the trend that more women graduate from law school and enter the legal profession than men, there remains an underrepresentation of women at partnership level. The aim of the research was to investigate how sponsorship had acted as an enabler to senior female lawyers who had achieved partnership and to ascertain whether a model could be created to implement sponsorship as a structured firm-managed programme. The research investigated what characteristics defined a sponsored relationship, the influence of management support for sponsorship, the unique qualities of a sponsor and the qualities required of a sponsee for the relationship to be successful.

An inductive qualitative study of partners in law firms was undertaken. The data was collected through purposive and snowball sampling methods and 19 semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with the interviewees. The interviewees represented female partners in law firms who had advanced through a sponsored relationship or partners who had sponsored female attorneys to partnership. The feedback was analysed using a combination of narrative, content and comparative analysis.

The research compared sponsorship to mentorship, counselling and coaching and distinguished sponsorship as career orientated. The research adapted the model of Simmons (2015) comparing and contrasting these concepts. The research concluded that there are seven characteristics of a sponsored relationship: skills development, relationship of trust, networking, developing competence, work allocation, promotion and developing an independent practice. The research findings provided a framework and a toolkit to develop a firm managed sponsorship programme. The research concluded by adapting McClelland's Theory of Needs to develop a compatibility model for matching powerful sponsors and ambitious sponsees.

KEYWORDS

sponsorship, mentorship, advancement of women, law firms, building networks, skills transfer, meritocracy

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 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.

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Date : 06 November 2017

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....	i
Keywords	ii
Declaration.....	iii
List of Tables.....	viii
List of Figures.....	ix
List of Appendices.....	x
List of Abbreviations	xi
Glossary.....	xii
CHAPTER 1: DEFINITION OF PROBLEM AND PURPOSE	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 The theoretical need for the study	3
1.3 The business need for the study	5
1.4 Purpose of the Research.....	6
1.5 Research Problem	7
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	8
2.1 Introduction	8
2.2 The Global Economy.....	8
2.2.1 Diversity in Business.....	8
2.2.2 Trends within the Legal Industry.....	9
2.2.2.1 Growth of medium to large law firms	9
2.2.2.2 Feminisation of the Legal Profession	10
2.2.2.3 Fall of Meritocracy.....	10
2.3 The South African context.....	11
2.3.1 Discrimination as a barrier to advancement.....	11
2.3.2 The Need for Mentorship and Sponsorship	12
2.3.3 Institutional Mandate and the Firms' Prerogative.....	13
2.4 Mentorship	16
2.5 Sponsorship	17
2.5.1 Definition.....	17
2.5.2 Sponsor, not mentor.....	18
2.5.3 Sponsor, not coach	19
2.5.4 Qualities of a sponsor	21
2.5.5 Qualities of a sponsee.....	21
2.5.6 Skills Development and Promotion.....	22

2.5.7	Access to Networks.....	22
2.6	Conclusion	23
2.6.1	Themes.....	23
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....		25
3.1	Introduction	25
3.2	Research Questions.....	25
3.3	Conclusion	27
CHAPTER 4: PROPOSED RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN.....		28
4.1	Introduction	28
4.2	Research design	28
4.2.1	Philosophy	28
4.2.2	Approaches.....	29
4.2.3	Strategies.....	29
4.2.4	Choice of research design.....	29
4.2.5	Time horizons	30
4.2.6	Validity and Reliability	30
4.3	Population and sampling	31
4.4	Unit of analysis.....	32
4.5	Sampling method and size	32
4.6	Measurement instrument.....	33
4.7	Data gathering process	36
4.8	Data analysis approach.....	38
4.9	Limitations in research design.....	40
4.10	Conclusion	41
CHAPTER 5: RESULTS.....		42
5.1	Introduction	42
5.2	Description of the Sample	42
5.3	Presentation of Results	45
5.4	Results for Research Question 1.....	47
5.4.1	What is your understanding of the concept of sponsorship?.....	47
5.4.2	What do you believe the characteristics of a sponsored relationship are? 48	
5.4.3	How relevant or important is the individual's expectations and goals as opposed to the team or firm's expectations of a sponsored relationship?.....	49
5.4.4	Why does sponsorship work in the law firm context?.....	49
5.5	Results for Research Question 2.....	50
5.5.1	What/who drives mentorship/sponsorship in your organisation?	51

5.5.2	How did you engage in the sponsored relationship?	51
5.5.3	What were your expectations at the start of the relationship?.....	52
5.5.4	How did management react to the sponsored relationship?	53
5.6	Results for Research Question 3.....	54
5.6.1	What are the characteristics of the sponsor that made him/her able to influence?.....	54
5.6.2	Was there a strategy or directive that was discussed and applied by the sponsor?	56
5.6.3	Was there skills transfer from sponsor to sponsee?	57
5.6.4	How did work in advanced or complex matters take place? Who initiated this conversation?	57
5.6.5	How was the introduction to clients or potential clients facilitated?	58
5.6.6	What was the expectation on the sponsor/sponsee when introductions to clients or potential clients were made?	58
5.6.7	Was promotion expected or discussed? How was promotion/ advancement facilitated?.....	59
5.7	Results for Research Question 4.....	60
5.7.1	How did the sponsee respond to skills development?	60
5.7.2	What qualities of the sponsee assisted with building a network?.....	61
5.7.3	Was the sponsee promoted? How did that come about?.....	61
5.7.4	Was the sponsee's advancement as a result of a merit based award, statutory compliance requirements, team or firm strategy or any other reason? ...	62
5.8	Conclusion of findings	63
CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS		65
6.1	Introduction	65
6.2	Research Question 1: What are the requirements for a successful sponsored relationship?	65
6.2.1	Sponsorship was not Mentorship	65
6.2.2	Sponsorship is Structured	67
6.2.3	Types of Sponsorship	68
6.2.4	Senior Sponsor and Junior Sponsee.....	69
6.2.5	Willing participants	69
6.2.6	Relationship of Trust	69
6.2.7	Compatibility	70
6.2.8	Advancing women.....	70
6.2.9	Transfer trust.....	70
6.2.10	The expectations of the sponsee.....	70
6.2.11	Sponsorship works in law firms	71

6.2.12	Conclusion	71
6.3	Research Question 2	72
6.3.1	Firm Driven programmes.....	72
6.3.2	Expectations – Set goals.....	72
6.3.3	Discrimination	73
6.3.4	Trend of Medium to Large Firm	73
6.3.5	Conclusion	73
6.4	Research Question 3	74
6.4.1	Characteristics of Sponsor	74
6.4.2	Sponsor driven skills transfer / Sponsor driven competency building / Sponsor driven networking / Sponsor driven promotions.....	74
6.4.3	Conclusion	75
6.5	Research Question 4	75
6.5.1	Qualities of a sponsee.....	75
6.5.2	A merit based approach	75
6.5.3	Conclusion	76
6.6	Additional Constructs	76
6.6.1	All male interviewees have all female teams	76
6.6.2	Work-life balance or work-life alignment.....	76
6.6.3	Person with most potential to earn more money must be released to do so.....	77
6.7	Conclusion	77
CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION		82
7.1	Introduction	82
7.2	Implications for Law Firms.....	82
7.2.1	Management Support and Senior partner driven.....	83
7.2.2	Model compatibility on Theory of Needs.....	83
7.2.3	Measurable outcomes	85
7.2.4	Merit Based.....	85
7.3	Research Limitations.....	85
7.4	Recommendations for Future Research	86
8.	REFERENCES.....	88

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Data Collection Matrix.....	34
Table 2: Phases of Thematic Analysis.....	39
Table 3: Demographic Representation of Sample	43
Table 4: 20 Most Recurrent Codes.....	46
Table 5: Why does sponsorship work in law firms	50
Table 6: Drivers of Sponsorship in Law Firms	51
Table 7: Ranking of Characteristics of Sponsor.....	55

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Law Society of South Africa Report on the Legal Profession	1
Figure 2: A gender comparison of responses on management support.....	13
Figure 3: A model for removing traditional barriers to achieve gender diversity	15
Figure 4: Comparison between Mentoring, Coaching and Sponsorship.....	19
Figure 5: Mentoring, Counselling, Coaching Venn Diagram	20
Figure 6: Saturation of Data	40
Figure 7: Gender Split of Sample	44
Figure 8: Racial Split of Sample	44
Figure 9: Proposed Adaptation of Simmonds (2015) Model.....	67
Figure 10: Proposed Model for In-team Sponsorship.....	78
Figure 11: A proposed Sponsorship Toolkit.....	81
Figure 12: Proposed 4-M Framework for Sponsorship	82
Figure 13: Compatibility model based on McClelland's Theory of Needs.....	84

LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM.....	93
APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE	94
APPENDIX 3: ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER.....	97
APPENDIX 4: TURNITIN RESULTS	98
APPENDIX 5: LIST OF CODES	99

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BBBEE	-	Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment
BWASA	-	Business Women's Association of South Africa
CALS	-	Centre for Applied Legal Studies
CEO	-	Chief Executive Officer
EE	-	Employment Equity
LSSA	-	Law Society of South Africa

GLOSSARY

C-Suite

The term is used to collectively refer to the executive management of the company.

Double Burden

Women who are employed and still have to attend to domestic duties at home.

Large Law Firms

The Law Society of South Africa has created categories for reporting attorney statistics. Their first category are law firms that have 50 or more partners and these are categorised as large law firms of which there are 17 in South Africa.

Medium Law Firms

The Law Society of South Africa has created categories for reporting attorney statistics. Their second category are law firms that have 20 - 49 partners and these are categorised as medium sized law firms of which there are 15 in South Africa.

Old Boys Network

This concept is used to describe a community of male members who have similar background in terms of education, employment, religion, political affiliation or of living in the same area, who establish a business connection.

Small Firms

The Law Society of South Africa has created categories for reporting attorney statistics. There is a category for 10-19 partners which would be categorised as small to medium or boutique firms, and there is a category of 1-9 which can be categorised as small law firms.

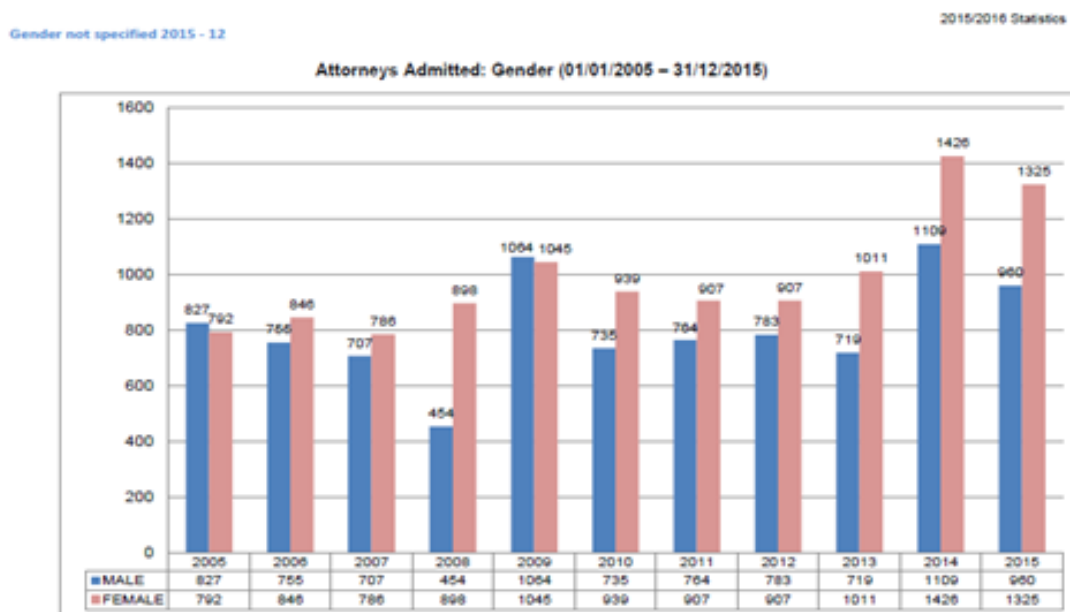
CHAPTER 1: DEFINITION OF PROBLEM AND PURPOSE

1.1 Introduction

The aim of this research paper was to research the concept of sponsorship as an enabler to advancing women in law firms. The legal profession has historically been a male dominated environment and have increasingly become more attractive to females as a chosen profession.

The Law Society of South Africa ("LSSA") statistics confirmed in Figure 1 below that since 2006, more female lawyers have been admitted as attorneys than male lawyers and there is an increased feminisation of the workforce (Campbell & Charlesworth, 2012; Pringle, Harris, Ravenswood, Giddings, Ryan, & Jaege, 2017).

Figure 1: Law Society of South Africa Report on the Legal Profession



The law firm environment is based traditionally on the philosophy that lawyers sell time and the revenue model is based on the billable hour. Aligned to billing is finding and maintaining good quality work that would build one's skills, and ensure that clients remain loyal (Campbell & Charlesworth, 2012; Pringle, et al., 2017).

The structure in a law firm is a pyramid structure based on earnings, seniority, competence and qualification (Pringle, et al., 2017). The base of the pyramid is made up of trainee lawyers or candidate attorneys. Once qualified, these young lawyers become associates and then endeavour to climb the various levels to reach the top of the pyramid, which is partnership. The lower level of the pyramid is where skills

development, knowledge transfer, confidence and competence building takes place. Once an associate can demonstrate the ability to work independently, had built a client base and achieved fee targets, the opportunity for partnership opened up.

The challenge for lawyers, was not only to develop skills and competencies but to also build a client network which would provide continued work (Havener, 2012). It was regarded as especially difficult for female lawyers to win a client's trust in a corporate environment due to the challenge of being perceived as having personal responsibilities and not being available to service clients, as male counterparts can.

South African law firms are mandated by legislation to give priority to vulnerable groups, like women and historically disadvantaged South Africans, for advancement in corporate structures. All companies are required to meet a 50 percent quota of female representation on boards (Republic of South Africa, B50/2013).

It was commented, not just in law firms but in the business environment, that there was a perceived stagnation of women's careers as they got closer to partnership or management (Pringle et al., 2017, McKinsey, 2016, Bain & Co. 2017). The research of the Centre for Applied Legal Studies ("CALS") (Manyathi-Jele, 2014) and Pringle et al.(2017) confirmed that there remained a gender imbalance of lawyers at partnership level.

Women face a number of challenges within the corporate environment that prevent them from progressing, like work life balance, family responsibilities and an inability to meet targets in terms of the "billable hours" model (Havener, 2012; Campbell & Charlesworth, 2012). The Centre for Applied Legal Studies (CALS) in 2014 reported that women faced gender, race and sexual discrimination (Manyathi-Jele, 2014) which acted as barriers to advancement.

The solution recommended by the CALS study was that women required mentorship and sponsorship to advance in the profession. Women who were sponsored were more likely to reach career advancement goals (Sexton, 2014).

This research focussed on sponsorship as an enabler to the advancement of women in law firms. The literature review examined the concept of sponsorship and ascertained that the reason that sponsorship was an effective enabler was through four themes that overcame the traditional barriers to women advancing in law firms. The themes defined the characteristics of sponsorship, considered the impact of management support, identified the qualities of senior, powerful sponsors and recommended the qualities required of sponsees. These themes were translated into research questions that were then posed to interviewees through a qualitative inductive study.

1.2 The theoretical need for the study

Bozeman & Feeney (2007) argued that mentoring was a topic that had limited progress in the development of theory. The authors indicated that current theory was not based on research but on "one-off" studies based on limited samples and with focus on correlations instead of careful causal explanations.

The authors recommended that a useful theory should have "explanatory depth and breadth apart from its immediate social utility" (Bozeman & Feeney, 2007, p 720). As a consequence, an understanding of sponsorship was required, independent from mentorship. It is widely acknowledged that sponsorship is a form of mentorship. The colloquial understanding of sponsorship used the word interchangeably with mentorship. It was relevant to ascertain through theory, the distinction between mentorship and sponsorship in the study of law firms, and how these assisted with the advancement of women.

The theoretical framework was based on the development and application of substantive theories (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). The research questions were based on a particular phenomenon in a specific industry with a defined population; sponsorship was an enabler to female attorneys advancing to senior positions in law firms.

Saunders & Lewis (2012) asserted that any research topic must be specific and measurable. Mentorship is a very wide topic and there are clearly defined nuances between coaching, mentorship and sponsorship. This research proposed to look at sponsorship on its own and to clearly define what the qualities of a sponsored relationship are. Secondly, the research focussed only on sponsored relationships in law firms and not the legal industry generally. Finally, in attempting to obtain some metrics through the data collection, a clear explanation of sponsorship was provided to improve and develop a framework which could be implemented in the legal industry.

Hoyt (2012) built on role congruity theory that stated that a bias is developed in a social structure when stereotypical beliefs about members of a group will view them to be incongruent with a social role. Likewise the gender bias that existed in workplaces dictated that stereotypical beliefs of women made them incongruent for a leadership or management role. Hoyt (2012) further argued that the gender bias stemmed from a mismatch between gender stereotypes and the characteristics for success.

Hoyt (2012) proposed that these gender biases have come about through social role theory that defined the specific types of work done by women and men. In applying the

role congruity theory to women in law firms, the research identified factors or characteristics that showed how the bias in social structures i.e. the institutional ideology of the firm or its management, had altered to create new perceptions about women and enabled sponsored relationships to assist the advancement of women in law firms.

Robbins & Judge (2015) provided context to why individuals entered into sponsorship relationships in the form of expectancy theory. Expectancy theory stated that the compulsion to behave in a certain way or follow instructions was based on the expectancy of a certain outcome and the desirability of that outcome. In this regard, sponsors and sponsees entered into sponsored relationships with a set of predetermined desirable outcomes which were then achieved through the relationship and with each party acting in accordance with specific desires, which might be different irrespective of whether the actions or behaviour were the same.

Path-goal theory required the leader to assist followers to reach goals through direction and support and to ensure that the followers' goal is compatible with the organisation's goal (Robbins & Judge, 2015). Attaining goals was achieved through mentorship or sponsorship which assigned senior lawyers in relationships of responsibility for juniors or protégés. However the mentorship or sponsorship relationship, not only assisted the junior meet defined goals, but also assisted the senior to meet the firm's goals on retention of female candidates or compliance with relevant equity legislation.

Servant leadership set the qualities that a sponsor should possess to focus on developing opportunities for juniors (Robbins & Judge, 2015). This was tested in the research which looked at the qualities that sponsors in successful sponsored relationships, possessed.

McClelland's theory of needs was developed in 1961. The theory stated that individuals are motivated by achievement, affiliation and power (Royle & Hall, 2012). However, Royle & Hall's research was based on whether the theory of needs translated to a feeling of accountability, at first for learned needs for the individual, and then informal accountability for others in the team. The study partially corroborated the authors' hypothesis that individuals developed, through McClelland's theory, an informal accountability for the performance or welfare of others in their team.

The role of the sponsee was equally important in the success of the sponsored relationship. In this regard the qualities of self-actualisation theory and self-efficacy theory (Robbins & Judge, 2015) were tested against the individual qualities of the sponsees interviewed.

Personality trait theories (Ettis & Kefi, 2016) are based on the five major personality traits :

- Openness - intellectual curiosity to new ideas and flexibility of thought
- Conscientiousness - disciplined, organised and trustworthy
- Extraversion/Introversion - sociable, communicative and seeking leadership
- Agreeableness - trust, modesty, altruism and interpersonal qualities, and
- Neuroticism - anxious, unstable and melancholy

The authors' research was based on whether personality traits determined who would be better at entrepreneurship than others. The research found that individuals with qualities of openness, conscientiousness, extraversion and agreeableness were more successful as entrepreneurs. Law firm environments are entrepreneurial in nature in that lawyers need to market skills, find clients and sell a product. Personality trait theory explained what made lawyers successful in the profession.

1.3 The business need for the study

McKinsey (2016) concluded that a Chief Executive Officer ("CEO") or management driven agenda for gender transformation was twice as likely to succeed in attaining gender transformation or diversity goals. The model proposed by McKinsey argued that sponsorship formed part of an ecosystem for gender transformation and with CEO and management commitment was likely to enable more women to advance in the organisation.

Havener (2012) argued that graduates required skills transfer in order to become competent. Law firms provided the necessary skills transfer but the cost of training lawyers had escalated. Law firms, as businesses, are driven to be profitable and the requirement was for junior lawyers to be skilled quicker so that firms can reduce the cost of training by having the junior lawyer bill fees. Mentorship and sponsorship were proposed to assist with accelerating skills transfer and advancing junior lawyers.

As more women choose to become lawyers and manage teams within law firms, a gendered workforce presents a way for equity and parity in the workplace. However a law firm's value lay with the individuals who hold the relationship with the clients. Traditionally this has been the role of the senior male partner in the firm. However retaining women or diverse candidates opens the market to new clients (Payne, 2016).

Law firm environments are ideal for testing sponsorship relationships because relationships of trust and a referral system regulate the lawyer-client relationship.

Clients will engage lawyers on the endorsement by other lawyers or someone the client trusts. As trust was the foundation for this business model so too, trust becomes the foundation for the advancement of junior professionals in the working environment. As trust was passed from the senior lawyer to the junior in what was traditionally known as the “old boys club” (Kogut, 2012), sponsorship redefined the old boys club by allowing senior lawyers to pass trust to female lawyers to assist them to advance in the profession.

Kay & Wallace (2010) confirmed that mentorship programmes were more effective in medium and large law firms due to the large number of senior lawyers being available to mentor and the associate-to-partnership career progression model.

1.4 Purpose of the Research

Mentorship and sponsorship are distinct concepts from each other. Mentorship was based on the mentor acting as a role model and a source for advice, professional or personal, as and when the mentee requires it. There are formal and informal systems of mentorship that are equally successful (Warnich, 2015; Payne, 2016). Sponsorship may be a form of mentorship but has more strategic intent. The sponsor's role was to ensure that the sponsee achieved career goals through active intervention from the sponsor. While this could take the form of advice, it was more intentional, deliberate and strategic and required the sponsor to, among others, teach the sponsee and transfer skills, introduce the sponsee to work at a higher or more advanced level, introduce the sponsee to important clients or to social events where the sponsee is exposed to potential clients in order to grow the sponsee's network, and elevate the sponsee by actively recommending the sponsee for promotions, positions, projects or areas of responsibility within the firm.

The literature asserted that diversity was paramount for financial success of any corporate and that having females in executive management positively influenced the bottom line (Payne, 2016). Mentorship and more specifically sponsorship appeared to be one of the main reasons why senior female professionals remained in law firms and were doing well. The objective of this research was to identify what the characteristics of a sponsored relationship are and to determine the key factors that sponsors and sponsees needed to demonstrate, for the relationship to be successful.

In developing an understanding of how and why the interviewees advanced through sponsored relationships, an insight was gained as to how women can be advanced in law firms and how firms can improve its diversity programmes. Skilled, experienced

lawyers are the solution to providing junior lawyers with something more than just a sympathetic ear (Havener, 2012). Havener (2012) endorsed the specific role that sponsorship served with junior lawyers in providing them with skills, advice, assistance on complicated matters, explanations, editing and with confidence building. The author suggested that there was no reason why this type of mentoring cannot be replicated and institutionalised on a larger scale.

1.5 Research Problem

Despite the increase of women lawyers in the legal profession, there remained an imbalance between male and female lawyers advancing to partnership. In a legislative climate that was designed to compel gender parity, a skills gap remained as a barrier to the advancement of women. Women who had advanced successfully had done so as a result of enablers. One such enabler was sponsorship. The research problem was therefore to fully understand how sponsorship acted as an enabler to advance women in law firms. The research proposed to do this through understanding:-

- the characteristics of a sponsored relationship;
- the extent that the firm's management inhibited or encouraged sponsored relationships;
- the key characteristics that a sponsor possessed for a successful sponsored relationship;
- the characteristics that a sponsee needed to demonstrate for the relationship to be successful;

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The literature review considered the current trends in the global economy regarding diversity and the inclusion of women in executive management. The literature review considered the advancement of women in the South African context with focus on the legal industry and the institutional obligations faced by law firms in actively advancing women into senior positions and complying with the relevant legislation. It considered the role that mentorship played in the advancement of women in business and then considered the concept of sponsorship as a mechanism or enabler for the advancement of women. The literature review informed the understanding of sponsorship to conclude that it was an effective enabler for advancing women to senior levels within law firms.

The literature review then informed the research questions that were explored through the research methodology and analysis.

2.2 The Global Economy

2.2.1 Diversity in Business

Bernal (2017) commented that firms with diversity in leadership performed better financially, had better client relationships and increased the firm's opportunities for innovation. In McKinsey's study of 233 companies, it was established that despite 50 percent of the respondents implementing more than 50 percent more measures, only 24 percent reported having more than 20 percent women in management (McKinsey, 2016). In addition, McKinsey reported that only seven percent of the companies had considered diversity as a top priority in its strategy and 88 percent of respondents did not believe that their company had done enough to promote gender diversity. Finally, 40 percent of respondents reported that their companies had implemented an effective gender diversity programme.

Travis, Doty and Helitzer (2013) reported that women are underrepresented in leadership from Fortune 500 companies. Wasserman (2016) stated that only 31 law firms in the USA were awarded by the Women in Law Empowerment Forum for meeting the following criteria : -

- having a minimum of 20 percent of women equity partners
- 15 percent of the branch heads being women

- 20 percent of women in primary governance committees
- 20 percent of women in compensation committees
- 25 percent of women as practice group leaders or department heads
- 15 percent of women in the top half of USA equity partners by compensation

Payne (2016) stated that diversity was the first to suffer in a poor economic climate. In the United States of America, one in five diversity candidates remained in law firms for a period of five years. The author argued that for law firms to thrive in today's economy, the firms must find a way to retain diversity candidates.

Increasing the number of gender diversity programmes or career advancement programmes was not required. McKinsey (2016) reported that removing the traditional barriers for advancement was required. These barriers consisted of the double burden of being employed and still attending to domestic chores, and the "any time" performance model which required individuals to make themselves available anytime to service the client, which caused women to make personal and family life sacrifices.

Mainiero & Sullivan (2005) described the "opt out" revolution whereby women chose to adapt careers to their needs instead of sacrificing personal needs for the needs of the firm. Parkes & Langford (2008) described this phenomenon as work life alignment and not a precarious balance that one must try to maintain between two equally balanced forces. The authors' research did not find a correlation between work life balance and employee engagement. The research revealed that the respondents complained of stress or workload, the number of hours worked and institutional factors. The authors' research concluded that the respondents who succeeded, sacrificed work life balance to achieve organisational goals, especially if the organisation provided a supportive environment.

2.2.2 Trends within the Legal Industry

2.2.2.1 Growth of medium to large law firms

The changing global economy had impacted and changed the structure of markets for legal services (Payne, 2016). These changes implied that the traditional manner of conducting business in law firms would need to change (Campbell & Charlesworth, 2012). The authors pointed to the rise of large and medium firms where, as the work became more focussed in smaller teams, the trend for more lawyers to work as employees in a law firm context instead of being self-employed as single practitioners, increased. The impact of this was that more female lawyers would become

components of those smaller teams and law firms would need to adjust to suit the female workforce.

In addition, Kay & Wallace (2010) argued that medium and large law firms provided a fertile environment for mentorship programmes due to the availability of lawyers to mentor and the associate-to-partner model for advancement. The authors' confirmed that young lawyers are twice as likely to find a senior lawyer to mentor them in medium and large firms and may have more than one mentor during the junior lawyers tenure at the firm.

2.2.2.2 Feminisation of the Legal Profession

Campbell & Charlesworth (2012) and Pringle et al. (2017) illustrated the phenomenon of the feminisation of the legal profession. In Australia, women represented 42 percent of all solicitors. In South Africa, the LSSA statistics for the period 2005-2015 depicted a steady increase of admissions of female attorneys to the legal profession. The latest statistics revealed that more female attorneys than male attorneys had been admitted into the profession since 2006 (See Figure 1, page 1). Female attorneys represented 38 percent of the legal profession in 2017 (LSSA, 2017).

2.2.2.3 Fall of Meritocracy

Ibarra (2010) advocated that as gender equality became an international issue, management of companies were required to identify high performing women in the organisation and match them with a sponsor through a career advancement programme.

Dowd-Higgins (2013) argued that career elevation was a way for women to leverage relationships and expertise to bring about equality in the workplace. The author motivated that there should be no meritocracy because the situation was one of inequality that needed to be corrected. This view was confirmed by Wasserman (2016) who argued that competing for leadership roles in law firms meant that one needed to pass a certain predetermined standard. The author argued further that as men did not need to meet that standard, women likewise, if they so wish to lead, should be given the opportunity to lead.

Bernal (2017) argued that women were not 'broken' in the first place in order to be 'fixed'. The author advanced that career advancement programmes are based on a meritocracy to 'award' those women that showed potential for the elusive c-suite. Bernal (2017) recommended that in order to get more women into management positions in law firms, a conscious decision needed to be taken to put women in

leadership. The author surmised that the status quo needed to change to create role models of female lawyers.

2.3 The South African context

2.3.1 Discrimination as a barrier to advancement

In a 2014 research study undertaken by the Centre for Applied Legal Studies, on the legal profession in South Africa, a three pronged finding was made:

1. All female respondents faced gender discrimination however, in addition, black women faced racial discrimination;
2. Race as a discriminating factor was identified amongst all black respondents however, in addition, black women faced gender discrimination;
3. All female respondents faced sexual harassment as a barrier in the profession but black respondents, in addition, faced gender and race discrimination (Manyathi-Jele, 2014).

The study identified that as a result of the intersection of these three barriers to success, there are fewer successful black women than white women in the legal profession. The study also highlighted the attitudes of senior male members of law firms who treated all juniors dismissively but white male juniors less so when compared to black or female juniors. In addition, in instances where a senior male did assist a junior female it was more paternalistic and evolved into a protective relationship which undermined the junior female, as the junior was treated as a “child”. The respondents acknowledged that these biases were not always deliberate but unconscious and unintentional (Manyathi-Jele, 2014).

This finding tied in with Hoyt’s assertion that stereotypes in companies diminished or increased in terms of the institutional ideology of the firm. If the firm was more conservative or patriarchal, it would try to defend the status quo and lead to paternalistic or dismissive behaviours as explained in the CALS study. If the firm was more liberal it would embrace new ideas and respond positively to change (Hoyt, 2012).

A census undertaken by the Business Women’s Association of South Africa (BWASA) reported in 2015 that women represented 51 percent of the South African population but made up 45.8 percent of the workforce. Only 29.3 percent of women were employed in executive management roles (BWASA, 2015). Fitzsimmons (2012)

explained that stereotypes dictated who was appointed to a board and who was not. Many people believed that female candidates on male dominated boards would be incongruent in the role, as males preferred other males who shared similar views.

2.3.2 The Need for Mentorship and Sponsorship

Kay & Wallace's research (2010) confirmed that mentorship was widely successful in socialising and integrating junior professionals into the new environment in law firms and into the professional roles and responsibilities. Sexton (2014) recommended that females who were closely mentored and sponsored, achieved a greater understanding of vocational training and were more likely to achieve career goals. The author stated that through leadership training and coaching, individuals who were sponsored received permanent placement in senior and executive positions within the industry.

All respondents in the CALS study highlighted the role that mentorship and sponsorship played in the transformation of the profession. Those respondents that had mentors or sponsors concluded that it was invaluable for junior attorneys to have a senior that :-

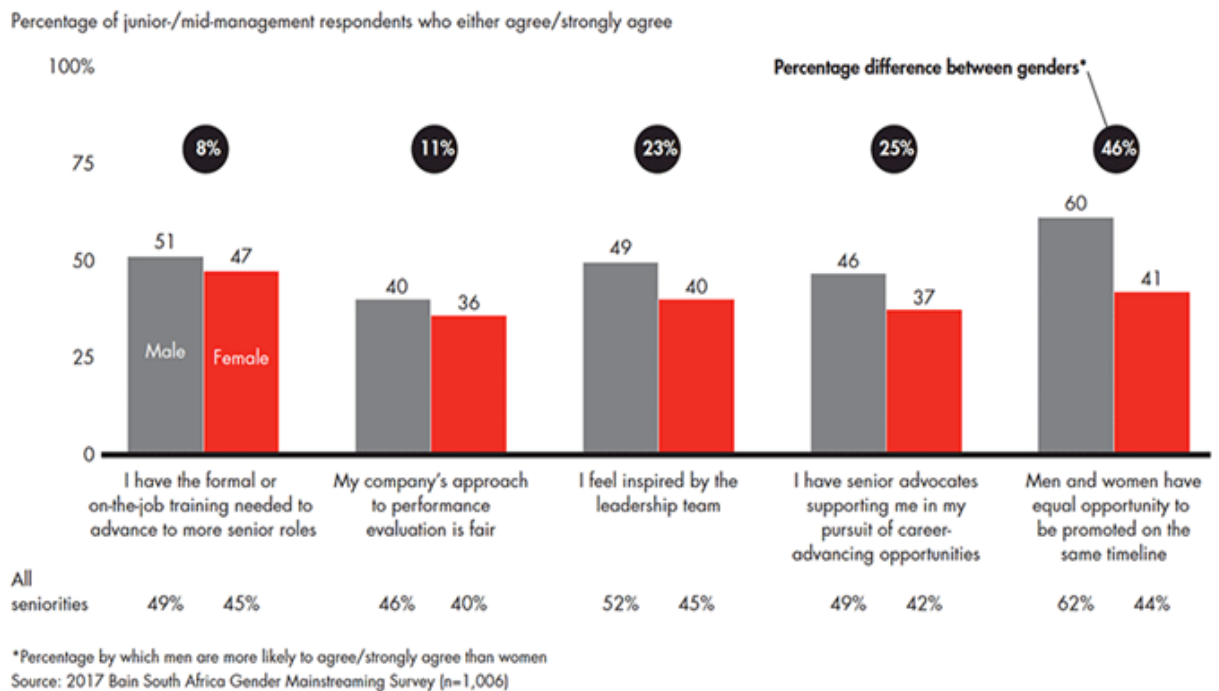
- Assisted with skills development;
- Developed their professional reputation;
- Built confidence;
- Built networks and client bases (Manyathi-Jele, 2014).

Pringle, et al. (2017) conducted research of female lawyers within the legal profession in Australia and confirmed the need for a senior lawyer to “pave the way” for the junior lawyer and “to go in to bat for you in order to get promoted” (P 441). The authors’ research confirmed that while junior female lawyers only commented on the barriers to advancement, the senior lawyers spoke of enablers like mentorship, sponsorship and informal friendships that had assisted them to advance in law firms.

The Bain report (2017) confirmed that women in mid-management felt marginalised and their efforts ignored. As a result promotions took longer as women did not feel that they had senior-level support. The research also showed that as women became more senior in the organisation, they did not receive sponsor support with their careers, and less than 40 percent of women in mid-management had sponsors. The results are depicted in Figure 2 below which illustrated that 37 percent of women in senior management had senior sponsors supporting them in the pursuit of career advancing

opportunities, as opposed to 46 percent of men who were sponsored in career advancement.

Figure 2: A gender comparison of responses on management support



Note. Bain & Company. (2017). Gender (Dis)parity in South Africa : Addressing the heart of the matter.

2.3.3 Institutional Mandate and the Firms' Prerogative

The McKinsey Women Matter Report (McKinsey, 2016) stated that governments played an important role in engaging the business world to change attitudes on gender diversity. In South Africa, the Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment Act 53 of 2003 ("BBBEE") (Republic of South Africa, 2003) created an institutional mandate for companies to transform on the basis of the seven elements of the scorecard. The scorecard dictated that points were awarded for institutional transformations that included previously disadvantaged persons.

The highest level on the scorecard looked at ownership structures and the percentage of equity and the value of economic interest that was held by Black South Africans. The second level of the scorecard assessed the efforts of the corporate to assist historically disadvantaged persons from acquiring ownership or equity. The next level of the scorecard looked at the percentage of turnover that was spent on skills development of existing staff (Republic of South Africa, 2003). In this regard the Skills Development

Levy Act No 9 of 1999 (Republic of South Africa, 1999) required that employers paid a levy to the South African Revenue Services. The funds were then allocated to industry Sector Education and Training Authorities. When funds are spent on skills development, up to 70 percent of the cost of the training can be reimbursed to the company as an incentive to skill previously disadvantaged staff (Republic of South Africa, 1999).

The fourth level of the scorecard assessed Employment Equity and this aspect looked at gender parity in the workplace and the company's efforts to employ females and disabled persons. The fifth level assessed whether the corporate was engaged in enterprise development and in this regard, the enterprise must be owned by a previously disadvantaged person and the company must make a significant investment in developing the start up. The sixth level interrogated the company's supply chain and questioned whether preferential procurement was given to historically disadvantaged persons. The seventh level related to the percentage of net income after tax that was spent on corporate social initiatives or socio economic development. The intricateness of the BBBEE legislation confirmed that the government had created structures that demanded transformation of the workforce.

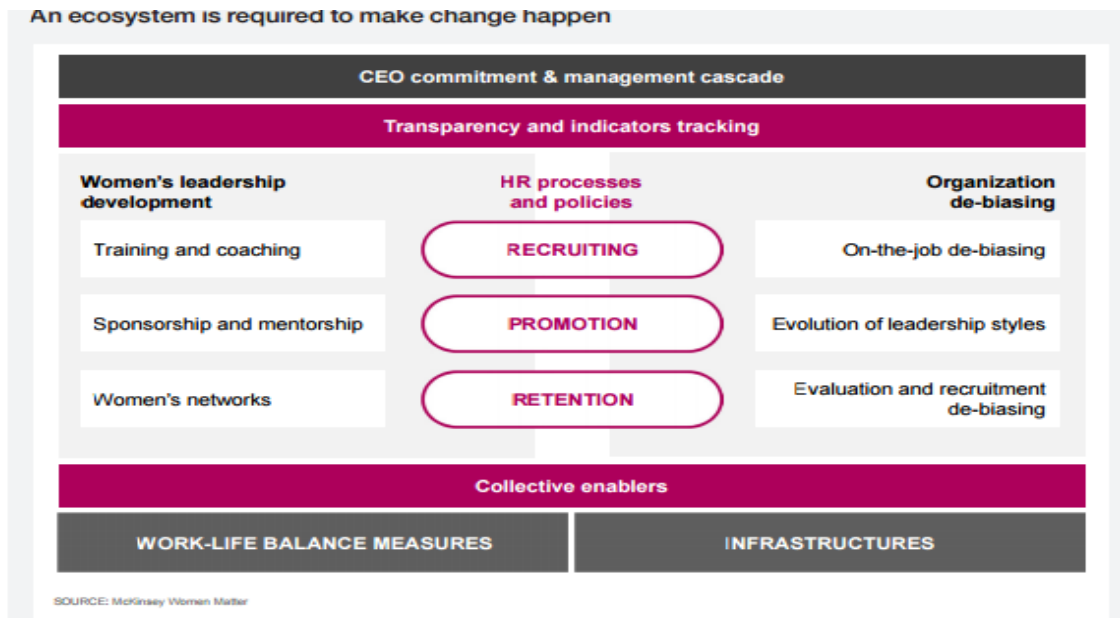
The Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998 ("EE") (Republic of South Africa, 1998) created the framework for the promotion and advancement of women, prior to the enactment of the BBBEE Act. The Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Bill B50 of 2013 (Republic of South Africa, B50/2013), was recently passed in the National Assembly. Minister for Women, Lulu Xingwana, has demanded the progressive realisation of 50% representation of women in decision-making structures (Xingwana, 2014), as required by the Act.

These pieces of legislation point to a mandatory framework that called for companies to revise recruitment, promotion and retention of women policies in the workplace. The legislation built compliance mechanisms into the Acts together with penalties for non-compliance. The legislative framework in South Africa achieved the recommendations of the McKinsey report (2016).

However institutional requirements for transformation do exactly what Fitzsimmons (2012) argued, it advanced women to boards or to management without the support structure to undertake the demands of the position. The 2015/2016 McKinsey report (2016) stated that gender diversity must have the support and commitment of the CEO and management to be able to integrate gender diversity at all levels of the organisation.

This commitment must be reflected in the programs, policies and processes that are being implemented by management to promote gender diversity. A strong management and CEO buy-in, active career advancement programmes and persistence are the “game changers” for gender diversity (McKinsey, 2016). An ecosystem needed to be created as depicted in the Figure 3 below.

Figure 3: A model for removing traditional barriers to achieve gender diversity



Note. From McKinsey.com.(2016). Reinventing the workplace for greater gender diversity, Women Matter.

The McKinsey model proposed at the first level that the behaviour change required for the advancement of women started with a commitment from the CEO and management structures. This commitment was then filtered through the various organisational processes that would track the efficacy of programmes for the advancement of women.

The McKinsey model proposed a three-pillared approach for removing traditional barriers. The first was to create a process focussed specifically on the development of women through support structures like training and coaching, mentoring and sponsorship and women's networks. This approach was to ensure that women were provided with the necessary structures and training to develop their competence and confidence. The second approach was centred on creating policies within the human resource functions of the organisation that would focus on the recruitment, promotion and retention of women in the organisation. The third approach involved the de-biasing of the workforce to create a sensitisation to gender issues through on-the-job

debiasing, assisting with evolving the leadership style of the organisation to embrace diversity and to critically de-bias in evaluation and recruitment processes.

These approaches were termed collective enablers which would ultimately result in women being able to achieve work life balance as well as infrastructure support networks. The Bain Report (Bain & Company, 2017) recommended focus on three aspects: societal, organisational and personal. The report proposed that despite the legislative framework provided by government, the onus rested on society, institutions and corporates to support government interventions to achieve gender parity. Secondly, corporates needed to drive an agenda for gender transformation and individuals seeking advancement, needed to have a strategy and be proactive in achieving those goals.

This research intended to look specifically at whether institutional support in the form of partner or management support could be translated into a model for sponsorship within the McKinsey model framework.

2.4 Mentorship

Mentorship can be formed formally or informally (Warnich, 2015; Payne, 2016) and informal mentoring relationships have always existed between an older person (the mentor) and a younger person (a protégé or mentee). The relationship was marked by an underlying promise that the mentee would accept the mentor's advice and would apply it in the mentee's life, or task.

Payne (2016) proposed that mentorship was creating a plan and executing on that plan for the mentee's success. Mentoring had adapted through innovative ideas and had been designed to build skills and propel the mentee out of perceptions of the mentee's value and skill set (Warnich, 2015). There are a number of different models for mentorship i.e. one-on-one mentoring, project-based mentoring and developmental networks (Blood, Trent, Gordon, Goncalves, Resnick, Fortenberry, Boyer, Richardson, & Emans, 2015). The authors explained that developmental networks are the latest type of mentoring model that emphasised the importance of relationships with people who can :-

- Help get the work done;
- Help advance one's career; and /or
- Provide personal support.

Blood et al. (2015) indicated that developmental networks included traditional mentors or career advisors but also family, friends, colleagues, e-mentors and peer mentors, in fact anyone who could offer diverse viewpoints.

Warnich (2015) asserted that the key to success was a sound mentoring foundation built on trust and understanding that will be supportive in terms of skills development and providing psycho-social and career support. Mentorship instilled confidence and affected thought leadership in the mentee. Payne (2016) indicated that the mentor must invest time and become a stakeholder in the mentee's career development. The parties must develop a relationship of trust, so that confidence problem areas can be identified and resolved.

Research had established that mentorship was effective in addressing confidence issues in the workplace (Ibarra, 2010; Fitzsimmons, 2012). There are many mentoring models that assisted to advance women in a challenging job market. The Levo League model included the likes of Warren Buffet as one of the mentors and offered virtual mentorship. It is a social network that gave women access to national thought leaders and leading men and women heroes (Dowd-Higgins, 2013).

Payne (2016) argued that, in addition, mentorship was a means to identify, confront and eliminate unconscious or implicit bias that posed challenges to the advancement of women in law firms. As sponsorship was derived from mentorship, this explanation of mentorship provided the foundation to build an understanding of some of the characteristics that are required in a sponsored relationship.

Mentorship was effective in law firms to assist with meeting fee targets, passing exams and undefined factors like appropriate behaviour or the ability to network. Mentorship was a crucial element in navigating this environment (Kay & Wallace, 2010). The author's concluded that women were 59 percent more likely to receive mentorship than a man in the legal profession.

2.5 Sponsorship

2.5.1 Definition

"A coach talks to you, a mentor talks with you, and a sponsor talks about you" (Catalyst, 2014). This was an apt and colloquial definition of sponsorship. What it highlighted was the nuances in different mentoring methods that achieved different outcomes. Travis, Doty & Helitzer (2013) defined sponsorship as "the public support by a powerful, influential person for the advancement and promotion of an individual within whom he or she sees untapped or unappreciated leadership talent potential" (p.

1414). Payne (2016) described sponsorship in the legal profession as the process by which a mentor evaluated the weaknesses and strengths of a mentee and then used the mentor's resources to promote the mentee's professional development, growth and visibility in the firm and the profession (Payne, 2016).

Travis, Doty & Helitzer (2013) stated that sponsorship was not a promise or a career plan but rather public support from a leader. Sponsors did not select or appoint sponsees but created visibility and opportunities to recognise the sponsee's value. This was confirmed by Wasserman (2016) and Bernal's (2016) assertion that in a sponsored relationship, sponsee's did not earn their place based on merit. Those qualities should be inherent in the sponsee.

The research question intended to establish the characteristics and goals of a sponsored relationship. The questions would also look at whether merit played a role in selecting junior females to be sponsored.

2.5.2 Sponsor, not mentor

Travis, Doty & Helitzer (2013) argued that mentorship did not depend on position or power but sponsorship did. A sponsor needed to advocate for the sponsee whereas the mentor was merely there to assist the mentee with the situation at hand.

Payne (2016) stated that for the relationship to work there must be recognition, leadership and support from the firm's upper management. Once this relationship grew to a certain extent then it was expected of the mentor to sponsor the mentee in terms of quality work assignments and opportunities inside and outside the firm (Payne, 2016). In mentorship, leadership support or recognition was not considered relevant.

Sexton (2014) distinguished mentorship from sponsorship by stating that a mentor can be anyone inside or outside the organisation who provided advice or information but a sponsor was a "highly placed person who helps people get promotions or helps place them in visible and developmental assignments" (p 378).

Ibarra (2010) and Travis, Doty & Helitzer (2013) argued that there are women in business that have a number of mentors but have lagged behind in achieving the c-suite status. Mentorship did not put one in leadership. Mentorship assisted to get a mentee to leadership through the mentee's own efforts. Sponsorship, however, achieved management or leadership appointments. Both authors concluded that sponsorship achieved through the efforts of the sponsor, what mentorship did through the efforts of the mentee.

2.5.3 Sponsor, not coach

Travis, Doty & Helitzer (2013) argued that coaching began where mentoring ended. Coaching, similar to mentoring, was a relationship that assisted the mentee to reach certain career development or personal goals, through actively assisting the mentee through the mentee's own efforts. However coaches did not exert power or influence to advance the mentees' careers. Coaches served as a sounding board to the best course of action to take, or may offer suggestions to the mentee on what to do.

Figure 4, below, set out the nuances between a sponsor, a coach, and a mentor. The model looked at the power designation of a sponsor and determined that a sponsor must have a hierarchical or positional authority. This was discussed further in 2.5.4 below. In addition, the model advocated that sponsorship was succession planning or leadership development and envisaged a long term relationship spanning many years. In addition the model determined that sponsoring was providing career direction or protection during growth and was directly related to being part of the ordinary work relationship. Coaching on the other hand was described as a short term relationship focussed on achieving a specific result that was within the skills and expertise of the coach.

Figure 4: Comparison between Mentoring, Coaching and Sponsorship

Mentoring vs. Coaching vs. Sponsorship

	Power	Topic	Duration	Boundaries	Reward
Sponsor	Hierarchical or positional authority	Succession planning, leadership building	Long-Term: many years	Part of regular work	Career direction, protection during growth
Coach	Special knowledge	Transfer of specific information, tools	Short-Term: class or program duration	School or training program's scope and management	Student: passing a test Coach: payment
Mentor	Wisdom authority	Career or personal growth	Mid-Term: 6 to 12 months	Mentoring program's scope and management	Mutual learning, recommendations, feedback

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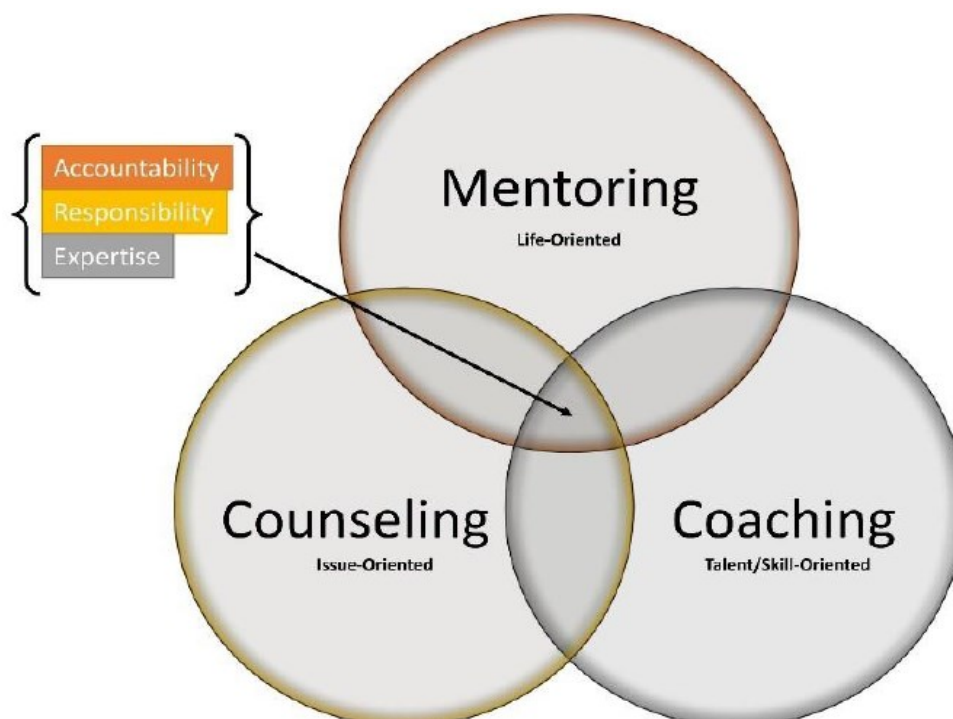
13

Note. From Dickenson, K (2015). Mentors and Role Models - Best practices in many cultures. mentoringstandard.com.

A Venn diagram presented by Simmons (2015) drew a distinction between mentorship, coaching and counselling. The diagram reflected that mentorship was life orientated and was similar to giving advice or support (Payne, 2016). Counselling was differentiated from mentorship as being issue orientated, in that the relationship was formed around a specific issue that the individual was struggling to resolve due to a range of emotions or factors that made the solution unclear. Finally, coaching was defined as talent or skills orientated as the individual needed assistance from a coach to strengthen or focus the talent or skill (Dickenson, 2015).

The Venn diagram proposed in Figure 5 below intersected the three concepts in order to demonstrate the different characteristics of each concept and the relevance of distinguishing what enabler was required in differing circumstances. The author stated that at the core of the various enablers existed accountability, responsibility and expertise. Accountability rested on both parties to be accountable to each other and for the outcome of the process. In all three concepts, responsibility for executing on a plan or strategy rested with the receiver. Finally, expertise, knowledge and experience were required by the giver to enable the receiver to progress.

Figure 5: Mentoring, Counselling, Coaching Venn Diagram



Note. From Simmons, D. (2015, June 15). Do you really need a mentor?

2.5.4 Qualities of a sponsor

Travis, Doty & Helitzer (2013) asserted that the sponsor must be powerful and must be able to exert influence. The sponsor must publicly advocate for the advancement of the sponsee (Ibarra, 2010). The sponsors needed to open doors to promote the sponsee (Payne, 2016).

Catalyst (2014) stated that a sponsorship relationship was one where a powerful leader drove the relationship and used strong influence to assist the sponsee attain high visibility assignments. The powerful sponsor assisted with promotions or employment and advocated for the sponsee in many settings, behind closed doors and championed the sponsee's work and potential with senior leaders (Ibarra, Carter & Silva, 2010).

The CALS report recommended that transformation required a champion, someone who was senior, had power in the organisation and who was both respected and a high fee earner. The study advocated that change occurred when those who wield the power in the firm initiated the change. Advancement of women in the profession was not a human resource function but an executive leadership function (Manyathi-Jele, 2014).

2.5.5 Qualities of a sponsee

Kay & Wallace (2010) argued that juniors who focussed more on a legal career and pursued law as a fulltime occupation were more successful in seeking out and obtaining a mentor or sponsor. In addition the authors' found that junior lawyers with a strong internal locus of control were more likely to receive mentoring assistance. Travis, Doty & Helitzer (2013) argued that sponsees required nothing more than the desire to occupy the c-suite. Sponsors needed to ensure that sponsees are appointed to those positions, and mentors and coaches would then assist the sponsee to become competent in those positions.

Wasserman (2016) argued that strategy was vital to the success of the sponsee. In this regard, not every opportunity was a good opportunity that will advance the sponsee's career. It was the responsibility of the sponsee to say no to opportunities even if it developed the sponsee's abilities. The Bain report (2017) set out the profile of a successful woman. The report stated that the following characteristics were the most common amongst the research sample :-

- working hard to be ahead of the game

- having confidence but humility in abilities
- seizing opportunities and taking risks
- excel in everything but learn from mistakes
- constantly learning
- being interested in other people they work with

The research ascertained whether that these qualities were evident in those women that were sponsored and assisted with the sponsorship relationship and acted as a catalyst to the advancement of women.

2.5.6 Skills Development and Promotion

Fitzsimmons (2012) stated that in defence of the lack of female representation, an argument had been advanced that there was not enough talent amongst female candidates to fill positions. Fitzsimmons (2012) argued further that advancing females on boards or in management was not enough. The author proposed that what was required was for them to perform in terms of their mandate and to bring that particular diversity or perspective to board functions.

The literature differed, in that some authors (Travis, Doty & Helitzer, 2013; Fitzsimmons, 2012; Bernal 2017) believed that the role of the sponsor was mainly to advocate for women and that women just need to be appointed. Authors writing specifically for the legal industry (Havener 2012; Payne 2016), argued that skills transfer was an important element of the sponsorship relationship which preceded promotion or advancement.

Ibarra (2010) believed that skills transfer was an integral part of the sponsorship relationship and a criticism levelled was that too many sponsors moved on after the promotion of the sponsee without ensuring an effective transition of the sponsee to the new position and without ensuring that the sponsee reached clearly defined levels of competencies. Sexton (2014) confirmed that successful mentors and sponsors had to take responsibility for skills development and promotions in female executives.

2.5.7 Access to Networks

Fitzsimmons' (2012) research on diversity of board directors revealed that it was not enough to have a gender diversified board. The author added that lack of networks was a crucial barrier as women failed because they did not have access to networks like the old boys club. Sexton (2014) confirmed that network ties were important for information

flow and career advancement. This was echoed by Wasserman (2016) who stated that the sponsee needed to start building networks from the beginning and to use every opportunity within those networks to create visibility for the sponsee inside and outside the firm.

Hewlett & Rashid (2010) stated that networking and relationship building was essential to help women develop the ties, visibility, and organisational know-how. Management was instructed to build networks within the firm to create internal support for the female lawyer in developing a skills set but also outside the firm to develop relationships with clients. Ibarra, Ely & Kolb (2013) acknowledged that women and men had different networks and men's networks appeared to be stronger and they were more likely to sponsor or develop opportunities for junior males who they viewed would succeed, than women.

Ibarra & Hunter (2007) confirmed that there were three types of established networks. The first was operational, the second was personal and the third was strategic. Operational networks ensured that individuals could rely on others within the organisation to achieve completion of projects or tasks given. Personal networks achieved personal development and growth. Strategic networks, which the authors believed was the most under-utilised, were networks that created new business opportunities and assisted with career advancement. Women advancing to executive level were required to build strategic networks (Sexton, 2014).

2.6 Conclusion

2.6.1 Themes

The literature review identified the following themes.

Theme 1: skills transfer, building a network and promotions.

The literature review regarding the legal profession indicated that junior lawyers required skills development and access to clients to be able to build a practice. The ideal way to achieve this was through transfer of skills from a senior lawyer. There was an imperative for senior lawyers to take an active role in skilling juniors to start generating revenue due to the economic climate and the changing legal profession. There appeared to be an obligation on the sponsor to provide the sponsee with opportunities to develop the sponsee's competence, and build networks. Through developing competencies and having a client base, junior lawyers would advance

through the profession. Those represented the criteria in a sponsored relationship to assist women advance in law firms.

Theme 2: institutional ideology of the firm or organisational culture

The literature review indicated that management was responsible for gender diversity in a firm and that a firm or management created an agenda and climate for change that was implemented and driven by the management or CEO. If the institutional ideology or organisational culture of the firm was to maintain the status quo, then it was the prerogative of the sponsor to influence management.

Theme 3: the powerful leader

The literature review revealed that the sponsor must possess qualities that will drive the sponsored relationship to ensure the success of the sponsee. The leadership qualities of the sponsor were significant in building the trust relationship between the sponsor and sponsee and transferring the trust to clients. The sponsor's qualities must also have an element of credibility to be able to influence management to promote or advance the sponsee.

Theme 4: the ambitious follower

The literature advised that women needed assistance from a sponsor in a corporate environment. Divergent views argued that all women required sponsorship and not just those women that showed potential. The divergent views questioned whether the qualities of the sponsee were relevant to the success of the sponsored relationship.

These themes provided insight into the concept of sponsorship and provided a conceptual foundation to inform the research questions.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH QUESTIONS

3.1 Introduction

In determining how sponsorship was an enabler to advancing women in law firms, the research proposed to understand:

- the characteristics of a sponsored relationship;
- to what extent the firm's management inhibit or encourage sponsored relationships;
- the qualities of a sponsor; and
- the qualities of a sponsee ;

The literature review revealed that a framework on sponsorship was created around the following themes :-

Theme 1: skills transfer, building a network and promotions

Theme 2: institutional ideology of the firm or organisational culture

Theme 3: the powerful leader

Theme 4: the ambitious follower

The research questions were derived from the themes identified in the literature review. The research questions tested the characteristics provided in the literature review, clarified the role of management in the relationship and outlined the qualities that drove sponsors and sponsees.

3.2 Research Questions

RESEARCH QUESTION 1

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR A SUCCESSFUL SPONSORED RELATIONSHIP?

This research question was intended to ascertain the interviewees understanding of the definition of sponsorship and what they believed the characteristics of a sponsored relationship were. The question probed whether the interviewees knew the distinction between mentorship and sponsorship. The question interrogated what the determinants of a successful sponsored relationship were and whether individual needs and expectations were considered and merged, or whether the strategy for the

sponsored relationship was determined externally by management or team dynamics. The question was intended to conclude that sponsorship worked well in the law firm context.

RESEARCH QUESTION 2

TO WHAT EXTENT DOES THE FIRM OR MANAGEMENT INHIBIT OR ENCOURAGE THE SPONSORED RELATIONSHIP?

The research question questioned whether the institutional ideology of the firm or organisational culture or other factors played a role in determining the success of the sponsored relationship. The literature review indicated that successful sponsored relationships were driven by the organisations management who would dictate a particular agenda for transformation.

RESEARCH QUESTION 3

IN WHAT WAY DID THE SPONSOR EXERT STRONG INFLUENCE IN DETERMINING THE CAREER PATH OF THE SPONSEE?

This research question interrogated what was required from the sponsor, in order to advance the interests of the sponsee, and how did one prioritise the various requirements: skills transfer, building a network, promotion or advancement. The question looked at the qualities of the sponsor and questioned who initiated the sponsored relationship or advanced the sponsee's agenda for advancement. The question interrogated whether a strategy was an important metric in a sponsored relationship.

RESEARCH QUESTION 4

WHAT QUALITIES DID THE SPONSEE POSSESS THAT ASSISTED IN REACHING CAREER GOALS IN THE SPONSORED RELATIONSHIP?

This question looked at the role of the sponsee in the sponsored relationship. The question assessed the extent that a sponsee determined the strategy for skills development and advancement. The question interrogated whether sponsees were selected based on merit or other criteria.

3.3 Conclusion

The research questions comprised of sub-questions that interrogated each research question to provide the inductive research data sought. A series of 19 questions were compiled that provided interviewees an opportunity to share a perspective on the phenomenon of sponsorship and impacted on the themes provided. The research questions are attached as Appendix 2.

CHAPTER 4: PROPOSED RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

4.1 Introduction

In order to fully understand the concept of sponsorship in law firms and how it advanced women, the literature review provided the following characteristics of sponsorship namely:

1. The sponsor must be able to provide skills or be able to assess the skills of the sponsee and enable skills transfer to take place;
2. The sponsor must introduce the sponsee to existing clients to build the sponsee's networks and introduce the sponsee to potential new clients with an endorsement of the sponsee's proficiency;
3. The sponsor must actively promote or advance the sponsee for promotion within the law firm;
4. There must be buy-in or assistance from management for the sponsored relationship.

In addition, the literature review suggested that the characteristics of the sponsor and the sponsee are relevant to the success of the relationship. The literature highlighted four themes and informed the 19 questions that were formulated in Chapter 3. The research design was chosen to elicit the relevant data from the interviewees through the process.

4.2 Research design

4.2.1 Philosophy

Saunders & Lewis (2012) explained that a research philosophy explains the purpose for doing the research. It related to the development and nature of that knowledge. In this regard, there are four types of research philosophies: positivism, realism, interpretivism and pragmatism.

The philosophy for this research was based on an understanding of the subjective behavioural responses to sponsorship in a specific context. This context was in relation to female lawyers within large to medium corporate law firms. Having considered the philosophies of positivism, realism and pragmatism, the ideal philosophy that could explain the research was interpretivism. Interpretivism studied social phenomena in its natural environment (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). This was a subjective enquiry that

sought to draw patterns of behaviour from the differences in human experiences. This type of philosophy is highly relevant in the context of organisational behaviour and in managing people.

4.2.2 Approaches

The research followed an inductive approach. Inductive research commences with the data observations that led to the general conclusions about the theory (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). This research looked at grounded theory (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). The theory was developed from data based on a qualitative study where observations or interviews were conducted. Saunders & Lewis (2012) supported the fact that aspects of deduction did take place when the interviews led to data, which were then tested further. Theoretical concepts were not tested through empirical research. Rather the theory was expanded to provide insight into the specific research problem.

4.2.3 Strategies

There are three types of research strategies (Saunders & Lewis, 2012): exploratory, descriptive and explanatory. This study focussed on research that is in part exploratory, and in part explanatory. The reason is that the literature review indicated that there is a need for established theory around the conceptual understanding of sponsorship and a distinction needed to be made between sponsorship and mentorship. The data added a perspective or insight to the body of knowledge already available to the researcher. In addition, in defining sponsorship, the researcher interrogated why it was required, and how it affected the interviewee. The research provided new insights of how sponsorships exist in medium and large law firms in South Africa and what behaviours existed from the interviewees that made it a successful relationship.

Grounded theory is the development of theory from data collected and is used for inductive strategies of research (Creswell, Hanson, Clark & Morales, 2007). In this case, the interviews conducted with sponsees and sponsors in different teams provided insights to inform on the development of theory. The data itself affirmed existing theory set out in the literature review.

4.2.4 Choice of research design

Saunders & Lewis (2012) provided a number of alternatives for researchers in choosing the research design. Some favour case studies, quantitative studies with

surveys, archival research or ethnographic research. Because the research proposed an inductive strategy which was both exploratory and explanatory in nature, the researcher chose to undertake a qualitative study of 20 interviews comprising of sponsors and sponsees. The research was conducted through face to face semi-structured interviews of respondents. Qualitative research allowed for the asking of “how” and “why” questions and allowed the researcher at times to go off the questionnaire and probe the interviewee’s on topics they seemed interested in (Bailey, 2014). The data provided insight in how the interviewee’s felt about what they were talking about and provided an emotional aspect to the collection of data. It gave the researcher insight on how interviewees experienced sponsorship, how they interpreted their role in the relationship and how the relationship impacted them.

Zikmund, Bibbin, Carr & Griffin (2010) confirmed that a qualitative face to face interview allowed for probing which resulted in in-depth and elaborate answers from the interviewees, sometimes allowing for the sharing of historical context or allowing for lengthy explanations to situations unknown to the researcher. The interviews were conversational in nature and the questions posed were intended to commence the discussion (Saunders & Lewis, 2012).

4.2.5 Time horizons

Saunders & Lewis (2012) stated that due to time constraints the researcher has to choose between a cross-sectional time horizon study or longitudinal studies. Cross sectional studies allow a researcher to take a snapshot of a particular research at a particular place in time. The study was undertaken as a cross sectional research study as interviewees were questioned on their perceptions of sponsorship currently. Many of the interviewees had to reflect on the past to the beginning of the sponsored relationship but the data required was based on their views at the present time.

4.2.6 Validity and Reliability

Saunders & Lewis (2012) explained that validity, tested whether the findings related to the research questions asked in the first place. In this regard, the research questions were derived from the literature review and positioned under four themes. In order for the data collected to be valid and reliable, 20 in-depth Interviews based on semi-structured questions were held to allow the subjects to speak freely about the research topic. It was intended that the interviewees will comprise teams of sponsors and sponsees to contrast the different perceptions of the same experience, however, of the

20 interviews only five teams were interviewed i.e. both the sponsor and the sponsee in the same relationship, due to lack of access and availability. The researcher was still able to secure all interviewees who were involved in sponsorship either as sponsors or sponsees.

Reliability, as explained by Saunders & Lewis (2012), was ensuring the sanctity of the data collection methods. In this regard, all interviews were conducted by the researcher face to face, save for two interviews that were conducted telephonically due to the geographical location of the interviewees based in Cape Town. All interviews were conducted at the interviewee's offices and each interview lasted between 30 mins and 1.5 hours. All interviews were audio recorded on a dictaphone to enable the researcher and the interviewee to engage in a conversation, and to ensure there was no bias in the collection of the data that could reveal inconsistent results.

4.3 Population and sampling

Sanders & Lewis (2012) stated that a population was the complete set of group members that can be surveyed in order to obtain the data and the sample is a sub-group of those subjects that could be extracted from the population and in whose data the researcher was specifically interested (Zikmund, Bibbin, Carr & Griffin, 2010). The sample size was the number of respondents in the sample that was being interviewed.

In this study the population was identified as all lawyers who had engaged in sponsored relationships within law firms. The sample only extracted sponsored relationships within medium and large law firms. From this sample, only 20 interviewees were selected to be interviewed. (Guest, Bunce and Johnson, 2006).

The research was restricted to law firms that are medium to large in order to assess how the teams were assigned to each other and how strategic the sponsorship was. It is opined that this data would not be available in smaller law firms where sponsorship may not have been a choice but as a means of succession planning. Succession planning is not the objective of this research. Advocates have not been considered for this research as they conduct business in their personal capacity and any sponsorship relationship is restricted to the personal development of the sponsee whereas in law firms, there is a hierarchy in the advancement structures and a number of clearly defined and measurable levels that the sponsee needed to progress through. The same reasoning applied to judges, magistrates and corporate legal advisors or paralegals, in that while the model of sponsorship can be replicated, the different

environments may provide too many data points based on its differentiation to draw consistent patterns of behaviour.

While the identity of the law firms was not relevant to the research study, the researcher undertook to obtain a variety in the sample selected from various law firms in order to obtain diversity in the perceptions and insights into sponsorships.

4.4 Unit of analysis

The unit of analysis was the individual being interviewed and their insight and experience (Polkinghorne, 2005; Saunders & Lewis, 2012).

4.5 Sampling method and size

Saunders & Lewis (2012) stated that the selection process was relevant to data collection. A non-probability sampling method was selected as the researcher did not have a defined list of the population (Saunders & Lewis, 2012; Zikmund, Bibbin, Carr & Griffin, 2010).

The researcher chose purposive sampling as the researcher was only interested in those interviewees that had been engaged in sponsorship relationships (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). The researcher initially emailed the Human Resource personnel at twelve law firms within Sandton that fell within the medium and large law firm categories requesting whether they could identify potential interviewees in their respective firms and provide the contact details for these individuals whereafter the researcher would make contact telephonically or via email. The researcher had also posted requests on various legal networks and groups on Facebook, a social media site, to elicit voluntary participation in the research. This was unsuccessful.

The researcher emailed a number of senior partners in identified medium and large law firms and requested them to identify possible interviewees within their law firms and provide the researcher with their contact details so that they may be contacted telephonically for an interview. This was unsuccessful.

Four teams were secured through the researcher's personal networks. These interviewees were initially approached over coffee or lunch and each expressed an interest to be interviewed. The researcher thereafter used the snowball non-probability

sampling technique to ask the interviewees already interviewed to identify other possible interviewees who fell within the sample.

The legal profession at the level that the research was focussed was at the highest level i.e. partnership and so the researcher also required the assistance of senior members of the profession to assist with making contact. The chairman of Hogan Lovells arranged the interview with the chairman of Norton Rose Fulbright on behalf of the researcher. A senior partner of Hogan Lovells introduced the researcher to the chairman of Werksman Attorneys. The researcher engaged the head of Banking and Finance at Bowmans at a charity event who facilitated the interviews at that firm. Through personal networks other interviewees were engaged. The researcher's supervisor also assisted in facilitating an introduction to Cliff Dekker Hofmeyr.

4.6 Measurement instrument

The instrument of measurement was the questionnaire prepared based on the literature review. The literature pointed to four themes which then led to the research questions and sub-questions. The sub-questions were derived from the various authors' views on sponsorship. Table 1 below sets out the data collection matrix that explained how the questions were formulated.

Each question provided the interviewees an opportunity to share their own insights and opinions on the themes identified in the literature and also provided the relevant data to inform the models in Chapters 5 and 6.

Table 1: Data Collection Matrix

Proposition/ Questions/ Hypothesis	Literature Review	Data Collection Tool	Analysis
Research Question 1 What are the requirements for a successful sponsored relationship?	Ibarra, Carter & Silva (2010); Wasserman (2016); Travis, Doty & Helitzer (2013); Bernal (2017); Fitzsimmons (2012); Campbell (2012); Payne (2016); Hoyt (2012)	1. What is your understanding of the concept of sponsorship? 2. What do you believe the characteristics of a sponsored relationship are? 3. How relevant or important is the individual's expectations and goals as opposed to team or firm's expectations of a sponsored relationship? 4. Why do you think sponsorship works in law firms?	Thematic Analysis
Research Question 2 To what extent does the firm or management inhibit or encourage the sponsored relationship?	Ibarra, Carter & Silva (2010); Wasserman (2016); Travis, Doty & Helitzer (2013); Bernal (2017); Fitzsimmons (2012); Manyathi-Jele (2014) Pringle et al. (2017)	5. What or who drives mentorship/ sponsorship in your organisation? 6. How did you engage in the sponsored relationship? 7. What were your expectations at the start of the relationship? 8. How did management react to the sponsored relationship?	Thematic Analysis
Research Question 3 In what ways does the sponsor exert strong influence in determining the career path of the sponsee?	Manyathi-Jele (2014); Havener (2012); Payne (2016); Ibarra, Ely & Kolb (2013)	9. What are the characteristics of the sponsor that made him/her able to influence? 10. Was there a strategy or directive that was discussed and applied by the sponsor? 11. Was there skills transfer from sponsor to sponsee? 12. How did work in	Thematic Analysis

	Ibarra & Hunter(2007); Sexton (2014)	<p>advanced or complex matters take place? Who initiated this conversation?</p> <p>13. How was the introduction to clients or potential clients facilitated?</p> <p>14. What was the expectation on the sponsor / sponsee when introductions to clients or potential clients were made?</p> <p>15. Was promotion expected or discussed in the relationship? How was it facilitated?</p>	
<p>Research Question 4</p> <p>What qualities did the sponsee possess that assisted her reach the career goals in the sponsored relationship?</p>	<p>Ibarra, Carter & Silva (2010); Travis, Doty & Helitzer (2013); Fitzsimmons (2012)</p> <p>Ibarra & Hunter(2007); Sexton (2014)</p> <p>Wasserman (2016); Travis, Doty & Helitzer (2013); Fitzsimmons (2012); Payne (2016);</p>	<p>16. How did the sponsee relate to skills development?</p> <p>17. What qualities of the sponsee assisted with building a network?</p> <p>18. Did the sponsee get promoted? How did that come about?</p> <p>19. Was the sponsee's advancement as a result of merit based award, statutory compliance requirements, team or firm strategy or any other reason?</p>	Thematic Analysis

Note. The table sets out the four research questions, the literature that informed the research questions, the sub-questions utilised in the questionnaire and the type of analysis utilised.

4.7 Data gathering process

The most common approach to qualitative data gathering was through participant interviews (Polkinghorne, 2005; Saunders & Lewis, 2012). The researcher conducted 20 interviews, 18 of them were face to face and audio recorded. Two of the interviews were conducted telephonically and also audio recorded. The face to face interviews were conducted at the interviewees' offices at the interviewees' convenience.

The qualitative approach generated data by using a combination of exploratory and descriptive methods through semi-structured, in-depth interviews. The use of an interview questionnaire ensured consistency throughout the process (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). The following method was utilised :-

- Interviewees were identified and contacted either informally, telephonically or via email to request participation in the interview. In some instances the researcher engaged in an email correspondence or teleconference explaining the nature of the research before there was agreement to participate.
- Once interviewees confirmed their willingness to participate, the researcher engaged them on availability to schedule interviews. Once a date was agreed upon, formal calendar meeting invites were sent via email to the interviewees. The researcher attached to the email invite a short structured email confirming their agreement to be interviewed, the consent form and the research questionnaire.
- All interviewees received the same structured email and accepted the Outlook calendar request via email. There was no reluctance to participate in the study however concern was expressed by some of whether their views would be reflected as the firm's views. The researcher assured those interviewees that the data collected would be utilised confidentially and anonymity provided to direct quotations used.
- All interviewees were interested in the topic and only two rescheduled their meetings due to work commitments but ensured that their secretaries apologised profusely on their behalf.
- All interviews were scheduled at the interviewee's convenience and all were conducted during business hours.
- Prior to the interview the researcher undertook research via the internet on the interviewee to enable the researcher to anticipate time constraints and level of seniority of the interviewee. This was a good strategy as the interviewee's bio on their firm's website was printed with their photographs to identify them when attending the interview. A printed copy of the consent form and the research

questionnaire was stapled to the bio in anticipation of the interview. It pleased the interviewee's when they saw the researcher take out their bio together with a copy of the consent form and the research questionnaire.

- While most interviewees had printed a copy of the attachments to the calendar invite and had already signed the consent form, it made them comfortable to see that the researcher had prepared in advance to understand the person being interviewed. Only two interviewees had not read the questions beforehand.
- The researcher arrived 15 minutes early for all interviews, as it took time to park, obtain a consultation room, arrange refreshments (which is the protocol in law firms) and get set up.
- Eighteen consent forms were either signed in advance of the interview, or the form was signed before the interview commenced. The researcher confirmed with each interviewee that the data provided would be confidential. One consent form was emailed to the researcher and one was not sent as the interviewee withdrew due to health reasons.
- The objective and the scope of the research were explained on commencement of the interview so that the interviewee understood what the researcher's topic was.
- The semi structured interview was conducted in a conversational style which allowed the interviewee to speak freely and at times randomly. Notes that were made during the interview were merely to highlight themes that arose or names of persons which the audio recording might not pick up.
- During the interview, the researcher encouraged the interviewees to share their insights by giving the interviewees prompts from previous comments they made, instead of sticking rigidly to the questions.
- Due to the seniority of some of the interviewees, the researcher, out of respect, let them provide historical context to their answers before bringing them back to the topic. Nonetheless, all questions were answered.
- Current and new themes that emerged from the interviews were cross-referenced. This was to ensure compatibility with the literature review and to inform the model that emerged.
- The data was analysed to confirm the themes that emerged from the literature review and to identify new themes and patterns of behaviour.
- The data was cross-referenced with the literature review to enable further in-depth analysis

The interviews were audio recorded on a dictaphone, a recording device used extensively in the legal profession. The interviews were then uploaded to the Cloud, downloaded by the transcriber and transcribed in Microsoft Word format. The interviews therefore consisted of non-text data which was transcribed. The interview transcripts were coded for unit of analysis and thereafter conclusions were developed (Saunders & Lewis, 2012).

4.8 Data analysis approach

The approach to the analysis was to conduct face to face interviews that would be audio recorded and then transcribed. A first reading of the transcript allowed the researcher to look for recursive, emergent data (Saunders & Lewis, 2012) and themes (Zikmund, Bibbin, Carr & Griffin, 2013; Cresswell, Hanson, Clark & Morales, 2012).

The semi-structured interview allowed the researcher to explore patterns of behaviour during the interview and in the post-interview analysis (Saunders & Lewis, 2012; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Zikmund, Bibbin, Carr & Griffin, 2013). The researcher was also able to edit and correct the transcripts with regard to spelling or grammatical errors as well as to add notes about the interview.

A naming convention to give names to the interviewees as close as possible to their racial and or ethnic origin in the quotations listed in Chapter 5, Table 5, was utilised. The quotes are therefore attributed to a person and not to a category. The coding was done manually utilising Excel programme to assist the researcher with the vast body of data that was presented during the data collection process.

The data recorded in the transcripts was transferred individually onto an excel spreadsheet using keywords highlighted in the interview transcript. The coding was done line by line and in sequence of the order of the questions asked.

A thematic analysis was used to identify and analyse patterns or themes in qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This is represented in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Phases of Thematic Analysis

Phase	Description of the Process
Familiarising yourself with your data	Transcribing data (if necessary), reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas
Generating initial codes	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code
Searching for themes	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme
Reviewing themes	Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts (level 1) and the entire data set (level 2), generating a thematic 'map' of the analysis
Defining and naming themes	Ongoing analysis to refine the specific of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme
Producing the report	The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis

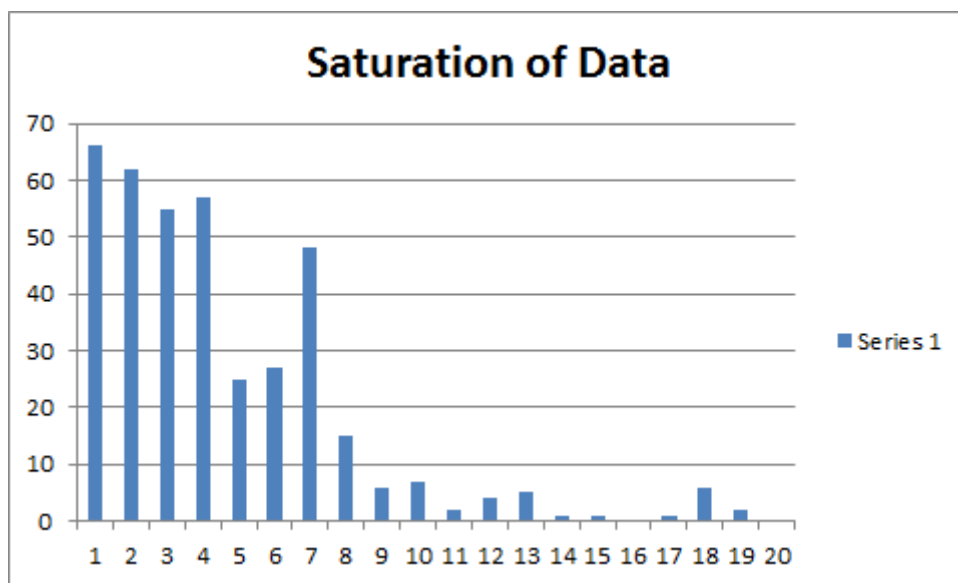
Note. Adapted from Braun, V. & Clarke, V.(2006).Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology. Qualitative Research in Psychology.

The interview transcripts initially revealed 869 data points which formed the initial codes for the data. A second review reduced the data points and removed duplication of themes. A third review reduced the number of codes to 431 codes. Throughout each review, the researcher marked recurrent themes in line with the literature review and new themes that emerged from the data coding process.

Common themes emerged from the coding through keywords. Themes were dominant within the groups of the research questions but additional themes emerged in the data coding.

Data saturation occurs during the coding process whereby the researcher reaches a point where no new or significant codes are being generated by the data (Morse, 1995). In this study data saturation was reached at 10 interviews. The graph below represents the number of new codes generated by each interviewee. The interviewees are presented in chronological order from the first interviewee interviewed to the last.

Figure 6: Saturation of Data



4.9 Limitations in research design

Demographically the group consisted of 4 Black participants, 2 Coloured participants, 3 Indian participants and 11 White participants. Race may indicate different criteria for sponsorship within the context of BBBEE and employment equity which was not evident in the current research. The researcher opines however, that the selection of the sample should have been more deliberate and that while availability dictated the sample selection, a more considered approach should be utilised.

The researcher is a senior partner of a law firm and this imposed significant restrictions on the openness of the respondents' participation. The researcher was the greatest limitation to the study as it influenced some of the respondents unwittingly to only offer insights that best reflected the firm's position. It is opined

that should any further studies be carried out in the legal profession then it should be from someone outside of the profession.

4.10 Conclusion

The methodology and research design was chosen to be able to get the exploratory narrative regarding sponsorship that was documented. The interviewees had different definitions and insights into sponsorship as a form of mentorship and as an enabler for the advancement of women in law firms. These exploratory definitions came out through the interviews. The data provided the characteristics of a sponsored relationship (Polkinghorne, 2005) and the qualities required in the sponsor and sponsee. The data further advised on firm managed sponsorship relationships.

A qualitative study was imperative for this type of research. The interviewees provided two different perspectives of sponsored relationships and while many relationships started some years back, the reflection at the current time gave insight into what expectations they had and how it had progressed to the current time.

The data was primary data and was given from the interviewees own frame of reference and in the interviewees own voices (Polkinghorne, 2005). These voices reflected the interviewees' experiences of how individual sponsored relationships contributed to advancing sponsees in law firms.

CHAPTER 5: RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

The aim of the research was to examine the concept of sponsored relationships within large and medium law firms and ascertain what the characteristics are that make sponsorship an enabler to the advancement or promotion of women lawyers. The research problem highlighted that there remains a disparity in the number of women who sit on boards internationally and nationally. The research therefore looked at the advancement of women to partnership level. The literature review identified four themes that were pertinent to the topic of sponsorship and these informed the four research questions. The research methodology was an inductive qualitative research that focussed on sponsors and sponsees and their experiences of sponsorship either informally or as a firm managed programme.

The researcher undertook 20 interviews with lawyers from different law firms but only utilised 19 interviews as one interviewee withdrew from the research due to ill health and the relevant consent form was not signed. The sample was selected from those lawyers who had already reached partnership level and had been either a sponsor or a sponsee. One interviewee, who was a senior associate, was volunteered by a firm however the interviewee was on the cusp of applying for partnership. The research was conducted through face to face interviews. Due to geographical location and availability, two interviews were conducted telephonically.

The research was based on the themes and research questions set out in Chapter 3. This chapter sets out the findings of the research and the analysis of the data received.

5.2 Description of the Sample

The sample consisted of 20 participants. In order to protect the identity of the interviewees and to maintain confidentiality, the interviewees are named randomly according to ethnicity and gender. Interviewees were also characterised according to how long they had been practising in the profession in order to see whether length of practice informed their opinions. There was no correlation in this regard.

Table 3 below represents the demographic breakdown of the participants.

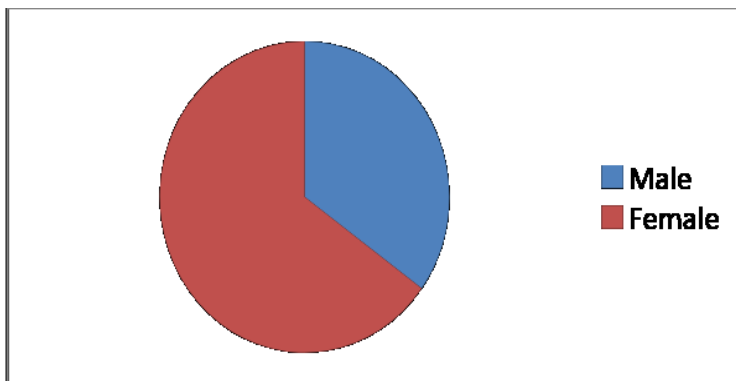
Table 3: Demographic Representation of Sample

Interview Candidate	Years in the practice	Sponsor (SR) / Sponsee (SE)	Gender	Race	Small Firm	Medium Firm	Large Firm	Word Count
#1 Jan	30-40	SR	M	W	x			12387
#2 Jabu	20-30	SR	M	B			x	7664
#3 Charles	30-40	SR	M	W		x		11287
#4 Saskia	0-10	SE	F	I		x		9573
#5 Amanda	20-30	SR	F	W			x	5542
#6 Kylie	0-10	SE	F	W			x	6259
#7 Portia	20-30	SR	F	W			x	14172
#8 Dwayne	10-20	SR	M	C		x		3738
#9 Rina	0-10	SE	F	I		x		3731
#10 Dianna	10-20	SE	F	W			x	7424
#11 Tom	30-40	SR	M	W			x	7408
#12 Pippa	10-20	SE	F	W		x		5380
#13 Jenny	0-10	SE	F	B		x		7424
#14 Sibongile	10-20	SE	F	B	x			5742
#15 Garth	30-40	SR	M	W			x	4985
#16 Marissa	10-20	SE	F	C			x	5123
#17 Lucky	30-40	SR	M	B		x		5234
#18 Michelle	30-40	SR	F	W			x	6562
#19 Paula	10-20	SR	F	W			x	n/a
#20 Devi	20-30	SR	F	I			x	8355

Note. The table represents the demographics of all participants in the research study, including size of law firm and length of interview for comparison.

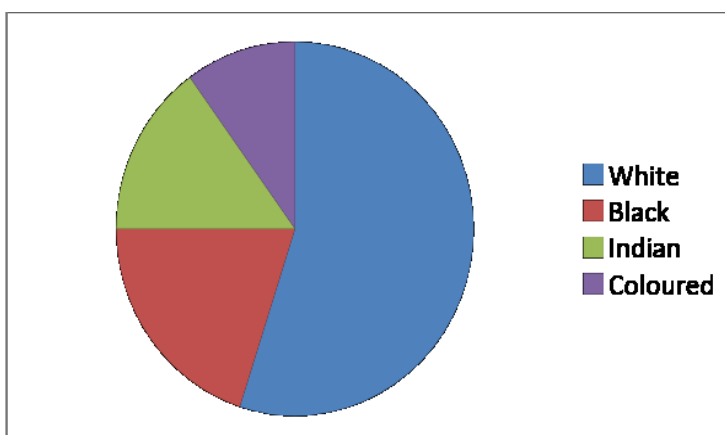
The sample comprised of seven male and 13 female participants. All seven males held the position of senior partner at their respective firms. Of the 13 female participants, nine females were senior partners, the remainder were all partners save for one that was a senior associate on the cusp of becoming partner. Senior partners were deemed to be all interviewees that had more than 15 years' experience.

Figure 7: Gender Split of Sample



All seven males and five females represented sponsors and eight females represented sponsees. On a race classification, there were four black interviewees, two Coloured interviewees, three Indian interviewees and 11 White interviewees. While the difference between "black" and "white" categories are negligible, the differentiation on the basis of race has been cited as a limitation to the study as more African black candidates interviewed may have revealed different criteria to sponsorship.

Figure 8: Racial Split of Sample



The 12 sponsors comprised of two black males, one coloured male, one Indian female and eight white females. The eight sponsees comprised of two black females, one coloured female, one Indian female, and four white females.

In line with the sample selection 12 participants practised at large law firms, six from medium sized law firms and two from small law firms. The 20 participants represented nine law firms in Johannesburg, with three law firms being multinational law firms, and five law firms being multi-office law firms.

A word count has been provided and the inference to be drawn from that is that some sponsors' had more insight into the concept of sponsorship than sponsees. The sponsors also appeared to understand the role of a sponsor better or had more insight into what can be done to advance women. The researcher was also obliged to allow senior partners of law firms the opportunity to speak without interruption which also accounted for the longer interviews.

5.3 Presentation of Results

The top 20 codes are listed below and are categorised on how many times they were mentioned by interviewees. This ranking was able to inform the themes as well as the new themes.

Table 4: 20 Most Recurrent Codes

Ranking (times mentioned by interviewees)	Code
36	Skills transfer
31	Meet criteria or requirements
28	Competence
26	Sponsorship was giving and receiving training
25	Communication
25	Goal orientated
22	Trust
21	Senior sponsor
19	Sponsor driven promotions
19	Selection of sponsee for sponsorship was merit based
17	There must be a strategy in every sponsored relationship
17	Sponsor driven relationship
16	Bright Stars/ Identify Talent
16	Build client base / network
15	Skills development / working on complex matters
15	Work Allocation / put on big deals
14	Development of career of sponsee
13	Sponsorship was an opportunity to address weaknesses and deficiencies
13	Career path progression or advancement
13	Tracking progress

Note. The table represented the 20 most recurrent codes out of 431 codes. A recurrent code was determined by the number of times the code was mentioned by interviewees.

The results are presented per research question and in the format of the sequence of the questions set out in Chapter 3. The key themes are reiterated below and direct quotations have been inserted.

5.4 Results for Research Question 1

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR A SUCCESSFUL SPONSORED RELATIONSHIP?

This research question was intended to ascertain the interviewees understanding of the definition of sponsorship and what they believed the characteristics of sponsorship are. It also provided insight as to whether the interviewees knew the distinction between mentorship and sponsorship. The question interrogated what the determinants of a successful sponsored relationship are and whether individual needs and expectations are considered and merged or whether the strategy for growth was determined externally by management or team dynamics. The question was intended to understand the concept of sponsorship and conclude that sponsorship worked well in the law firm context.

5.4.1 What is your understanding of the concept of sponsorship?

Four of the interviewees confirmed that they understood what sponsorship meant. The remainder of the interviewees stated that it was a form of mentorship and referred to sponsorship as mentorship. All agreed however that sponsorship was undertaken by a senior person or lawyer who took a junior person or lawyer under his/her wing and was responsible for the success of the junior lawyer.

“.. you’ve got someone who gives you a break, not only a break but who gives you the tools not only from a technical legal expertise but all the facets of running a private practise to then put you in a position where you’ve got the confidence, you’ve got to know how emotionally and otherwise you are in a position to start a practise...” - Jabu, sponsor

The concept of transferring trust emerged from the data. All interviewees agreed that trust was an important element of the practice of law and based on relationships of trust. These relationships can be between the sponsee and the sponsor, between the sponsor and the management and between the sponsor and clients. The sponsor developed trust throughout the sponsor's career and when taking on a sponsee risked that reputation by transferring the trust that management or clients had placed in the sponsor, to the sponsee, who had, as yet, not earned that reputation or trust.

5.4.2 What do you believe the characteristics of a sponsored relationship are?

The question was intended to elicit a number of qualities and characteristics that would define sponsorship. The interviewees used words like “training”, “developing”, “advocating for”, “nurturing”, “caring for”, “teaching”, “encouraging”, “supporting” and “giving advice”, in describing the characteristics of a sponsored relationship. The theory that sponsorship entailed skills transfer, building a network and promotions was put to the interviewees and the majority agreed that skills transfer, networking and promoting was part of sponsorship.

“...in my view, it’s a natural progression, if it’s a proper sponsee-sponsor relationship it’s a natural progression that you transfer skill, whether it’s skill on how do you conduct a meeting, how do you have a discussion with the clients or practise management or how do you write a piece of advice differently, it’s all part and parcel what you are trying to get the sponsor to achieve or sponsee to achieve over a period of time ...” - Devi, sponsor

Three interviewees commented that skills transfer was not relevant to sponsorship and that it was either part of mentorship or part of the training programmes at law firms. The distinction was drawn that sponsorship within a team had skills transfer as a component but that skills transfer was not relevant to sponsoring a junior outside the team or even outside the firm. These interviewees referred to a work allocation programme that assisted with skills transfer.

“... because we don’t at this point call it sponsorship specifically but we would probably deal with this more broadly under what we call our work allocation project because I mean as you would imagine the kind of, nature of the work and what you are involved in as a young lawyer is really the platform for progressing through the organisation...” - Amanda, sponsor

All interviewees agreed that assisting the sponsee build a network and a client base was an essential characteristic of sponsorship. Promotion was also an important aspect, especially within the firm context and for career advancement to partnership. Most sponsors stated that sponsorship was “taking a risk” or “putting yourself on the line” for the sponsee.

5.4.3 How relevant or important is the individual's expectations and goals as opposed to the team or firm's expectations of a sponsored relationship?

Most interviewees agreed that in a sponsored relationship, the individual's expectations are of paramount importance to developing a strategy for the sponsored relationship or for the advancement of the sponsee.

"...I think you never develop something or develop expectations for a particular individual without taking into account what they want it's because, again if you look at what motivates people and what drives people, is the values that they value the most, if you look at the team's value system you know you will spend most of your time on the 2 to 3 values that you consider the most important priorities in your life and irrespective of how much you know you try and focus on values that you probably consider mid to lower on your value hierarchy, you don't really succeed in doing that because naturally you spend most of your energy in places that motivate you or drive you, so short answer is you can't develop a sponsorship programme without taking into account the relevant sponsee's expectations and any programme that tries to do that will fail at some point or it will unravel at some point..." - Devi, sponsor

Two interviewees in firms where there was a formal programme for sponsorship, indicated that the expectations of the individual were less important than what the firm sought to achieve through the programme. The interviewees conceded that buy-in from the sponsee to make the programme work, was still required.

5.4.4 Why does sponsorship work in the law firm context?

In order to consider whether women can be advanced through sponsorship in the legal profession, this question was asked to establish what in the legal environment would be conducive to developing and implementing a model of sponsorship.

Table 5: Why does sponsorship work in law firms

Number of interviewees	Answer
1	The pyramid structure of a law firm environment created divisions between the various levels in a career path progression to becoming partner. The hierarchical system of the law firm environment is a natural sponsorship environment.
2	Law firms are built on trust and if a sponsorship relationship is one of transferring trust then this makes the law firm a good environment for sponsorship.
2	Communication is key to the legal profession and if one is communicating all the time, and communication is essential to sponsorship and therefore sponsorship would work in this context.
14	The changing nature of the legal profession and how training and teaching are part of the law firm ethos makes sponsorship work.

Note. The table represents the consolidation of the interviewees answers to the question.

As such sponsorship, especially when seen as skills transfers, knowledge transfer, skills development and building competence, is an ideal concept for advancement in law firms.

"...As a general rule a law firm is a training environment so we are constantly having new lawyers coming in who are fresh from law school and have to learn everything that is practical, it is highly hierarchical so one is expecting constant development, people are regularly coming to do their articles and pass their boards and they regularly do one or two Masters after that or other post graduates qualifications, so one is expecting people to be working hard and learning and focusing on their development..." - Portia, sponsor

5.5 Results for Research Question 2

TO WHAT EXTENT DOES THE FIRM OR MANAGEMENT INHIBIT OR ENCOURAGE THE SPONSORED RELATIONSHIP?

The research question considered whether the institutional ideology of the firm, or organisation culture, or other factors played a role in determining the success of the

sponsored relationship. The literature review indicated that sponsorship needed to be driven by the CEO or management who had an agenda for gender transformation.

5.5.1 What/who drives mentorship/sponsorship in your organisation?

Interviewees were asked to record the main drivers of the sponsorship relationship in the firm, using the following options given. The results are recorded below.

Table 6: Drivers of Sponsorship in Law Firms

Selected Drivers of Sponsorship in Law Firms	
Management driven initiative	3
Team dynamic/demands	-
Sponsor	12
Sponsee	3

Note. The table represented the answers provided by interviewees from the selection given.

Sponsors were the main drivers of sponsored relationships. In addition most sponsored relationships occurred within the team structure. While there was no active participation from management in the matching of the sponsor and sponsee, there appeared to have been support or no response to the sponsored relationship. It appeared conclusively that sponsors drove the sponsorship relationship in law firms, except in firms that had a structured programme.

“... he made it no secret that from my junior capacity, he will always say you have the potential to sit next to me at the boardroom table one day and normally I would just be like okay and he was right and he made sure it happened” - Rina, sponsee

5.5.2 How did you engage in the sponsored relationship?

The question was intended to investigate how sponsored relationships are formed to provide a basis as to what a sponsorship model should entail in bringing together sponsors and sponsees. 16 interviewees indicated that the sponsorship relationship grew within the team where a sponsor identified the “bright stars” and then focussed on developing their potential. Two interviewees indicated that they approached the sponsor to be sponsored and one was a product of a firm managed programme. All sponsees agreed that they entered their sponsored relationship while they were candidate attorneys or associates in the teams in which they were placed. This provided a platform early enough for the relationship to grow over a period of time.

“...we started a couple of years ago a really fantastic leadership development programme, so here is a form of sponsorship, we identify typically junior to middle level partners who we see as ultimately being the future of the firm in terms of running and managing the firm and practise groups within the firm, we identify say 2 to 3 of those depending on the size of a practise group, per practise group, and they go off on an 18 month programme, I suppose a little bit of a mini MBA as it were. The bring together some of the best parts of leadership and some practical stuff as well so that's got some great feedback and really it's been helpful and people start to see themselves as leaders and future leaders and they kind of know it's through these selection processes...” - Amanda, sponsor

5.5.3 What were your expectations at the start of the relationship?

In determining whether institutional ideology or organisational cultural factors played a role in the sponsored relationships, interviewees were asked what their expectations were at the start of the relationship. This was based on the researcher's assumption that many of the interviewees were in sponsored relationships that were firm driven. However the data revealed that the relationships were sponsor-driven and the responses of interviewees differed as a consequence. The responses were varied and unique to each interviewee. It was evident that sponsors had expectations that the sponsee would learn, work, develop a client base and be profitable.

“...I teach you how to be a good lawyer, all you have to do, you have to get the work, you have to do the work and charge your fee, you have to send out an account and you have to collect your outstandings. I mean you do the law but generally that's what law is about, if you can't get the work in the door because you don't know how to or you don't understand, you can be the best attorney in the world and you will have no work...” - Charles, sponsor

From the sponsees' perspective, most wanted to learn and grow in the law firm. The sponsees wanted to develop an expertise or competence.

“... from then I just progressed, I mean we can't as you know, know how hierarchies and milestones and whatever works and as I got to the next one I kind of expressed that interest to or an ambition to move up the ladder, look at my path to partnership”
- Dianna, sponsee

Jan, a sponsor, described how Pippa, his sponsee came to his team. He said that he had seen many young candidates come and go but what impressed him the most was

that from the start he told her what the requirements were and she went and achieved it. From that moment he decided that this was a bright star he would be willing to develop. At every level, she would tell him what she wanted to happen and he would discuss a strategy and goals with her which would then be achieved. The data revealed that there are many experiences like Jan and Pippa's, where the expectations of the sponsor and the sponsee are quite different at the beginning of the relationship but merged during the relationship towards a common goal.

5.5.4 How did management react to the sponsored relationship?

Relevant to the institutional ideology of the firm and whether institutional factors played a role or management support was relevant to the success of the sponsored relationship, interviewees were asked to reflect on how management reacted to the sponsored relationship. 17 interviewees indicated that management had no reaction, positive or negative to the sponsored relationship. Two interviewees indicated that management was supportive of the relationship as the sponsorship was a firm managed programme.

"...I used to be part of all the senior management here and I'm still quite influential here so I don't have a problem, I haven't encountered a problem with management support, we do, like most firms, have average time periods before promotion to the next level but then you do get stars where you have to try and cut the time period..."

- Tom, sponsor

Those interviewed in firm managed programmes were unable to describe the success of the programme as many were in its infancy or some were offshoots of mentorship initiatives. All interviewees however, indicated that there was support from management to the sponsored relationship. Whether this was as a result of firm buy-in or that the sponsor was in management or a senior person, was not clear. What was evident was that senior partners who are in management should be sponsors and should drive an agenda for sponsorship.

In addition, interviewees were asked whether there were any other reactions from team members to the sponsored relationship. A number of interviewees indicated that they were aware of negative feelings from peers to the sponsee's advancement or opportunities given by the firm. One sponsor indicated that there was a negative response from other partners in the team to the advancement of the sponsee as it appeared that the bulk of the work was reserved for the development of the sponsee, rather than distributed within the team. Sponsees confirmed that while they did not feel

discriminated against by seniors in the firm, their peers begrudged their sponsored relationships and their advancement.

5.6 Results for Research Question 3

IN WHAT WAYS DOES THE SPONSOR EXERT STRONG INFLUENCE IN DETERMINING THE CAREER PATH OF THE SPONSEE?

This research question interrogated what qualities or characteristics did the sponsor possess to advance the interests of the sponsee and how the various requirements of skills transfer, building a network, promotion or advancement were prioritised.

5.6.1 What are the characteristics of the sponsor that made him/her able to influence?

A number of characteristics were listed by sponsors and sponsees alike. The characteristics were ranked to the top 20 with one being the characteristic most likely to influence and 20 being the characteristic least likely to influence. Table 5 represents these top 20 characteristics. The characteristic mentioned most often was the seniority of the sponsor in the profession.

Table 7: Ranking of Characteristics of Sponsor

Ranking	Characteristic/ Quality
1	The sponsor must be a senior person in the profession.
2	The sponsor must be trustworthy
3	Sponsors must be head of department or in management
4	The sponsor must be respected
5	The sponsor must be influential
6	The sponsor must be willing to transfer trust from himself to his junior
7	The sponsor must have integrity
8	The sponsor must be willing to introduce junior to his clients or potential clients
9	The sponsor must be objective and fair
10	The sponsor must be a good communicator
11	The sponsor must be persuasive
12	The sponsor must not be threatened by the junior
13	The sponsor must have his own practice and own client base
14	The sponsors must be male
15	The sponsor must be authoritative
16	The sponsor must be willing to sponsor
17	The sponsor must be experienced or be considered an expert in his field
18	The sponsor must be successful or be a high fee earner in the firm
19	The sponsor must be a good human being
20	The sponsor must be willing to train and develop the junior

Note. The top 20 characteristics were chosen from 77 listed by interviewees.

The interviewees summed it up as follows :-

“... you need to be first comfortable in a position that you hold and you must be able to or willing to share or entirely that's the wrong word (Candice: or to develop) yes, to get the juniors to ultimately be on your level at some stage...” - Dwayne, sponsor

“...He was well respected he was well liked, he was on Exco and he was in management, he was able to make decisions, you know even to a certain extent if I spoke to him about something that was worrying me about anything at all, the way things were run, I knew I could do it, I knew I could say to him and he would, he would listen and 90% of the time he would raise it as an area of concern, I knew he was a conduit of communication to management if it was required or if it was necessary...” - Pippa, sponsee

5.6.2 Was there a strategy or directive that was discussed and applied by the sponsor?

Many of the interviewees spoke of informal sponsorship or relationships and only two interviewees were part of a formal firm managed programme. The question was posed as to whether a strategy or directive was necessary for the advancement of the sponsee. All interviewees confirmed that a strategy was discussed and goals set for what needed to be achieved through the relationship. All sponsees in informal relationships were emphatic that there was a discussion as to what they wanted to achieve. In instances where the sponsor did not engage the sponsee's expectations, a discussion was still held on career advancement by the sponsor.

“...We are quite deliberate about selecting where there are gaps in those particular areas, you know there are certain lawyers that will appear from quite early on as, I guess what you term, as stars and those are the obvious ones that you would seek to promote and ensure they get exposure to the right kind of work, the right kind of people etc. but there is also a precondition that we need to focus on women in particular and black lawyers...” - Amanda, sponsor

“...I mean aside from the fact that there would be actually a formal plan set out that is accessible to the person being sponsored, and the person doing the sponsoring and the organisation, I think it would be the fact that this is someone who clearly would enjoy support in the team that they are placed in, that there is a level of accountability going both ways, that there is measurable outcomes that are frequent or periodic, so not just at the end of 2012 when the person got to partner, instead,

what would happen if in the first year we know that there were four goals for this year and those four goals be the following, because we want the next year new goals...” - Jenny, sponsee

5.6.3 Was there skills transfer from sponsor to sponsee?

This question was formulated to confirm or dispel the theory that skills transfer formed part of sponsorship and comprised of an essential element of sponsorship. The data revealed that it was only relevant in sponsored relationships where both sponsor and sponsee were within a work team. The researcher named this concept in-team sponsorship as opposed to external sponsorship. The interviewees confirmed that skills transfer was necessary in a sponsored relationship and took place within a team dynamic. Four interviewees commented that skills transfer was not relevant for external sponsorship and was not a characteristic of that relationship. Three interviewees indicated that skills transfer was part of the necessary training programmes in the firm and irrespective of whether it was in-team sponsorship or external sponsorship, skills transfer did take place.

A distinction was also made on what is termed skills transfer. Interviewees spoke of vocational training and learning how to litigate or conduct their practice, others spoke of practice management and client management and still others reflected that skills transfer was on the soft skills, like how to conduct oneself with clients or opponents.

“...I don’t know I think what I impart in them, I don’t profess to teach them the law at all because they are all seem to know better than me, that’s the truth, and so it’s not about that, I only got one thing, I teach them or I demonstrate to them that you succeed in our field of work in litigation far, far better by treating your opponents well and respectfully, if you are stubborn and obstructive like some people prefer to be, I don’t think you would do well for yourself or your case...” - Garth, sponsor

5.6.4 How did work in advanced or complex matters take place? Who initiated this conversation?

The literature revealed that involving juniors in complicated, complex and large value matters was an essential way of building competence. All interviewees confirmed that doing complex, complicated work or high value work built the competence and confidence of the sponsee. Two sponsors confirmed that there was

a gradual introduction to complex matters. The rest agreed that sponsees were brought into complex matters right from the beginning. All interviewees confirmed that sponsees needed to be “stretched” to see what they were capable of handling. All allocation of work was done at the instance of sponsors.

“...I think that yes, when I said that essentially transferring of knowledge and transferring of the skills, that for me, if someone does it for me, that would build up my competence, confidence, ability to be able to deal with the big matter, because as you said I’m brought into a big contract and doing the contract, the next contract I get I am able to deal with it but you are right, there has to be the access to it, you know a good mentor or sponsor, as you put, it is not somebody who is going to keep work away from you or not bring you in on those deals...” - Saskia, sponsee

5.6.5 How was the introduction to clients or potential clients facilitated?

The literature review confirmed that a main characteristic of sponsorship was introduction to clients or building of a network. All interviewees confirmed that introduction to clients took place early on in the relationship. In fact it was expected from both the sponsor and the sponsee that getting to know the clients of the practice and/or getting to work on client matters was implicit. Most interviewees stressed the concept of teamwork and that clients had come to expect that lawyers work in teams and that any person in the team must be competent to do the client's work.

“...they would come with me to meetings with the clients, so I would take them, and early on I would not expect them to say anything, but the idea is that you would get that person to become familiar with the clients, if I’m not available you can tell the client to phone that person instead, for the clients to get their job done, not necessarily by me but I would never not expose somebody to a client or take them to the client interview because I thought they were too junior, that wouldn’t happen...” - Michelle, sponsor

5.6.6 What was the expectation on the sponsor/sponsee when introductions to clients or potential clients were made?

This question was posed to understand what sponsees and sponsors expected when introductions to clients or potential clients were made. Sponsors concluded that it was an opportunity for the sponsees to get to know the clients of the firm and to understand the client’s needs and to be able to assist them. Sponsees indicated that this was an opportunity to build a client base and to build a network. Both

sponsors and sponsees impressed that the needs of the client were paramount and it was important to understand what the client wanted and to deliver a good product. Servicing a client well, opened the door to new instructions or direct instructions to the sponsee. The theme of transferring trust was raised and many sponsees commented that the sponsor, by publicly endorsing the sponsee, was transferring the trust from the sponsor to the sponsee.

“... when he makes arrangements for the meeting, he would include me in that meeting and we would meet with that person, the first consultation would be with that person and that's when he would introduce me to the client, the doctors, saying that I'm the one who will be dealing with their matter and we would consult with them first time and from there I take over...” - Sibongile, sponsee

The research data further revealed that sponsors drove the sponsored relationship. Sponsors were instrumental with in-team skills transfer, introducing juniors to networks and the firm's client base. Sponsors confirmed the expectation that the junior would meet the client's needs and develop a relationship and network and sponsors actively supported the promotions of sponsees. In fact all sponsors indicated that they expected the sponsee to immediately develop relationships with the clients, build a network and leverage off the sponsor's network.

5.6.7 Was promotion expected or discussed? How was promotion/ advancement facilitated?

The literature review indicated that promotion was an important element of skills transfer. The question investigated whether promotion or advancement was a goal in sponsorship strategy. All sponsees confirmed that they had been promoted although not all attributed it specifically to the sponsor or the sponsored relationship. In most firms, promotions were managed by the firm's advancement processes and the sponsor's role was to discuss strategically whether the sponsee was ready for promotion. In all instances, the sponsees indicated that they did not believe that they were ready for promotion and hence promotions were sponsor-driven. When asked how did promotion or advancement come about, most sponsors also indicated that the firm's advancement process made the sponsee eligible for promotion and that while the sponsees did not feel ready, the sponsors facilitated various discussions to strategise how and when they would be ready for promotion. In some instances, promotions were deferred and a strategy to meet the criteria was put in place by the sponsor to ensure that the sponsee was ready for promotion at the next opportunity.

None of the interviewees confirmed that the sponsor had initiated the promotion process for them.

“...I said I wanted to be a partner so in my mind I had a plan and I wanted to meet that plan, and I knew every two years we were supposed to be promoted, and so now the position was more to go and chat to him about the plan...” - Marissa, sponsee

“...I was the head of the department and there were many conveyancers at that time who were in the department when (Pippa) was promoted to equity but again before she became partner, before the equity she was just a salary partner, I had already said to her and she had already achieved it, have your own clients and make your own money through your clients then you won't have a problem becoming an equity partner. So when I promoted her to equity, there was no reason why she shouldn't become equity because she already achieved what the firm expected of her...” - Jan, sponsor

5.7 Results for Research Question 4

WHAT QUALITIES DID THE SPONSEE POSSESS THAT ASSISTED HER REACH THE CAREER GOALS IN THE SPONSORED RELATIONSHIP?

This question looked at the role of the sponsee in the sponsored relationship. The question assessed the extent that a sponsee determined the strategy for her growth and advancement.

5.7.1 How did the sponsee respond to skills development?

This question was directed at sponsee's to ascertain how they viewed skills development and to the sponsors on how they perceived skills development was received. All interviewees believed that it was important to develop a skills set within the organisation. Some interviewees commented on sponsees having unique skills to start a new practice area or be skilled in technology or skills to add something new to the team. Unanimously all sponsees were grateful for skills transfer and knowledge transfer. One interviewee indicated that a junior was unhappy during the skills transfer phase and did not enjoy being in the team. The sponsor decided to mentor the junior instead. Four interviewees indicated that if juniors expressed excitement to learn, then the senior also developed an excitement to teach them and push them to their full potential. Almost all sponsors interviewed indicated that they “stretch” juniors during

skills development to see how they cope and if they cope well, then that is a positive sign that they (sponsees) are on the right track.

“...so for skills transfer I started working with (Dwayne) when I was just a candidate attorney in my very first year of articles, so for skills you could take it that I was a blank canvass... I definitely am the lawyer I am today because of his mentoring and guidance from a skills transfer point of view...” - Rina, sponsee

5.7.2 What qualities of the sponsee assisted with building a network?

The literature revealed that for sponsees to advance they needed to be ambitious and must want to progress in the profession. This question was posed to see what qualities were needed for the sponsee to embrace the sponsorship relationship. All interviewees confirmed that sponsees needed to communicate with clients and potential clients. One interviewee indicated that it was expected for sponsees to learn about the client and the matters before meeting with clients as there was an expectation that the sponsee must engage with the client. Four sponsees reflected that the sponsees approach and manner were different to the sponsors, which assisted to build separate networks from sponsors' clients or the firm's clients. Most sponsees indicated that while male seniors were conservative, as women, sponsees were able to be more personable, possessed soft skills and made conversation with clients that were not related to the work. Sponsees were described by sponsors as having a “gentle manner” or “bubbly personality”. It appeared that it was the manner in which sponsees communicated that was the most outstanding quality when building a network.

“...Well you need drive for one, you need to be able to take initiative, you need a degree of vision, and even if you have an introvert type personality, you must be willing to put yourself out there and you shouldn't be scared of failure, which allows you to put yourself out there to take risks and know that with every ten attempts you are likely to rather be successful with two, if you are scared of rejection or failure, marketing efforts in this regard are going to fail dismally ...” - Dwayne, sponsor

5.7.3 Was the sponsee promoted? How did that come about?

In paragraph 5.6.7 above, the question was designed to ascertain whether a strategy was put in place to advance the junior sponsee or whether any discussion took place. The question was posed to ascertain whether the strategy succeeded or not. All sponsees were promoted in the firm following discussion and strategy with their

sponsors. All promotions were part of a firm managed programme and so none of the promotions were instigated by the sponsor albeit that the sponsor ensured that the sponsee was promoted and that the sponsee met all the criteria.

“...So our promotions has changed quite drastically, however for the time that I have been in the firm. It used to be quite simple sort of a two years of article clerk, two years as an associate and then it was accepted that you would become a senior associate and then from there on it was a little bit more, they will keep it probably about four or five years and then partnership and we would have certainly partnership. Some people took a little bit longer, depending on what you are doing, they might put them in partnership and it was this sort of two to four years, and it's as long as you make your hours, it's done, ... and that has changed drastically in the seven years that I have been here and I was only an associate for one year and I was made a senior associate, but then the year I was a senior associate I worked about 3000 hours and part of that was because of this investment that they had put in, and I was going to be incredible, working on this matter, deals, so just like flying high ... I was making so much instead, like pouring my whole soul into this business, and because I sort of worked two years in one, they rewarded me and they said look, we are considering fast tracking you for senior associate, it's not that we have never done this but we haven't done it in a very long time and we are launching a new thing called the senior associate assessment programme, we want you to be the guinea pig for it, so I had to go through a lot of psychometric tests, I met with a senior psychiatrist, I did a lot of assessments, I had full day programmes that I had to do some role plays, and another assessment and I was the beginning of what we now have, for anyone who's going to become a senior associate but I was a first person to be put in this process and I made senior associate in one year...” - Kylie, sponsee

5.7.4 Was the sponsee's advancement as a result of a merit based award, statutory compliance requirements, team or firm strategy or any other reason?

There were unanimous responses from all interviewees that selection for sponsorship and advancement was based on merit. There was no indication that statutory requirements or firm strategy or an agenda to advance women played a part in the advancement of all female sponsees. There were two distinct views that were expressed. One view was that there was no other model and that changing the model for advancing women will create more problems than solving them.

“...if you keep putting people in boxes, you are inevitably just going to exacerbate the differences between males and females...” - Dwayne, sponsor

The second view considered the double burden that women faced of working in the law firm environment and taking on the role of wife and mother at home. Eight interviewees considered the changing needs of women and the concept of work life balance which all juniors were aspiring to, not just females. They questioned the conundrum of the current model of billable hours and considered that an alternative model would have to look at assessing lawyers differently, instead of billable hours. None had a solution to changing the model for advancement but acknowledged that it should change even if there were scepticism of when this change will occur.

“...I think that they need to be a little bit more focussed on what the outputs are as opposed to just that billable hour which will then allow perhaps for that flexibility to become the norm rather than the exception and to be regarded, as people are still committed as opposed to not being committed, but that's a whole cultural thing and we are a long, long way but I certainly think there needs to be a much more conscious recognition of the fact that women's careers, in particular, are going to have ebbs and flows, there is going to be periods of family focus or where a woman can't give a 150% and then it's going to be periods when they can ramp up again, and the fact that they are perhaps taking some time out to spend more time with the family, it's not a lack of commitment...” - Amanda, sponsor

“...it's difficult for these young ladies, it's difficult for them, they are doing well they can see that they can reach the mountain but there are certain things that stand in their way that are beyond their control, but the same time they want to be mothers, they want to be wives, and the only thing that stands between them, is that we don't accommodate the other needs as law firms and I think although we are running businesses and want to make money, I think in order to keep them, we need to be very creative and innovating and give them the space to assist them to succeed...” - Lucky, sponsor

5.8 Conclusion of findings

The data provided during the interviews provided insightful and thoughtful reflections on individual sponsored relationships. Some interviewees had never considered the depth of the relationship, nor the impact on sponsees. Sponsorship was the key factor in the advancement of all sponsees interviewed. Sponsees acknowledged that advancement would not have occurred had it not been for the sponsor and the strategic insight into career development. Interviewees who were managing firm

sponsored programmes commented that the reason for women-centred programmes was because the old boys club worked for men to the exclusion of women and the need for a managed sponsorship programme was essential for the advancement of women in law firms.

Two interviewees indicated that because the old boys club exists, women had no other way to advance other than through sponsorship. All females interviewed agreed that men are best place to sponsor women. Men occupied senior positions in law firms and appeared to have greater networks to be able to introduce the junior to. One interviewee believed that as more women joined the profession, the old boys club would die out.

The findings of the study also illustrated that related to advancement, were the twin issues of the billable hour model for assessment in law firms and the merit based criteria for selection for sponsorship and advancement. Despite the positive response to sponsorship and mentorship initiatives, none of the interviewees had been engaged for any other reason but that they had been identified as "bright stars" or "having talent". Even in firms that had an agenda for the advancement of women, there still appeared to be a reluctance to offer sponsorship to all females and only selected females were included in the programme.

Most interviewees felt that until the "billable hours" model for assessment was changed, the profession would not change. Most interviewees did not believe that the model would change. The sponsees commented firmly on wanting "work life balance" and flexibility but were also not sure whether choosing that would be at the expense of advancement.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

6.1 Introduction

The aim of this research paper was to understand the concept of sponsorship or sponsored relationships that existed in law firms. The research proposed to do this through understanding how sponsorship was characterised in the law firm environment and what made it successful in advancing women.

The literature review provided four themes which then translated to four questions. Through an inductive qualitative research methodology comprising of interviews conducted with sponsors and sponsees who are partners in law firms, a wealth of data was obtained which confirmed and added to the existing themes and provided new themes.

The data is discussed in terms of the research questions posed and the implications and impact on the literature review.

6.2 Research Question 1: What are the requirements for a successful sponsored relationship?

This question was posed to understand the concept of sponsorship and to distinguish it from mentorship or coaching. While the literature review looked at the three main components of skills transfer, access to networks and promotions, the data revealed that there are more characteristics. Skills transfer, access to networks and promotion were still the most mentioned characteristics in terms of ranking of the top 20 codes as set out in Table 4 (p 46). The question also interrogated whether the sponsee's expectations were relevant in sponsorship and to consider why sponsorship was successful in law firms. The following themes were derived from the data set out under the respective headings.

6.2.1 Sponsorship was not Mentorship

All interviewees agreed that sponsorship was not mentorship. The proposition put forward by Warnich (2015) that mentorship was a supportive relationship that assisted to instil confidence in the mentee through skills development and psycho-social support, was supported by the interviewees. The interviewees' responses supported Travis, Doty & Helitzer's (2013) contention that sponsorship was a process whereby a

senior sponsor provided public support for a junior sponsee towards career driven goals. While sponsorship had its foundation in mentorship it was distinguishable as being focussed only on career advancement of the sponsee instead of dealing with personal issues of the mentee (Travis, Doty & Helitzer, 2013). There was a clear distinction by interviewees, even when terminology was mixed, that mentorship and sponsorship had two different meanings.

The interviewees confirmed that mentorship was about personal issues and sometimes about practice management. Mentorship taught soft issues like how to market or how to be a leader, understanding the politics of the firm or just being introduced to members of the profession. The interviewees agreed that similar to sponsorship, mentorship can be formal or informal (Warnich, 2015). Mentorship can be created with any type of relationship that was supportive (Blood et al., 2015) but sponsorship was very specific to a senior sponsor within a work environment (Travis, Doty & Helitzer, 2013).

While the interviewees differed to what extent each of the characteristics of sponsorship contributed to advancement, all agreed that the singular goal of sponsorship was to enable the sponsee to gain independence in the profession by having a client base, meeting the necessary requirements and being promoted.

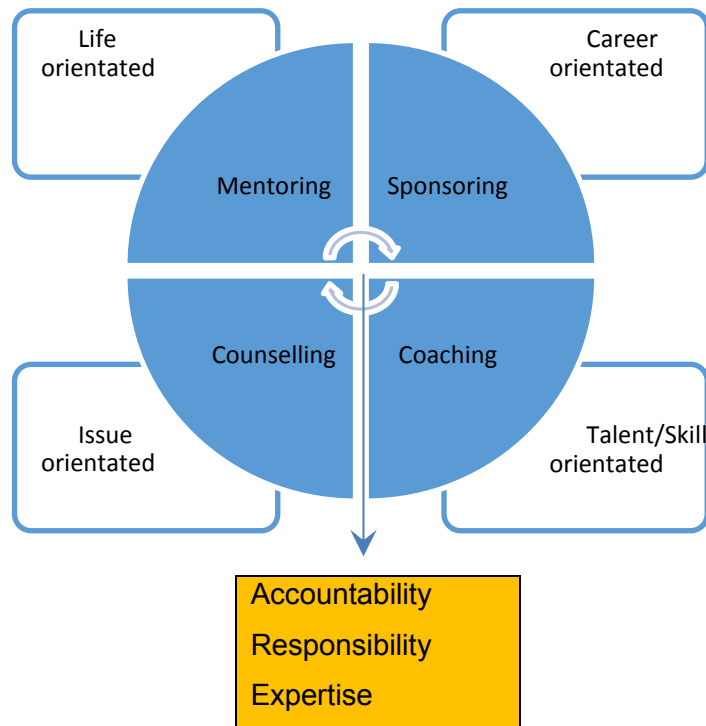
The literature review drew distinctions between sponsorship and mentorship (Blood, 2015) and sponsorship and coaching (Travis, Doty & Helitzer, 2013). The data revealed that sponsorship was career-orientated. The researcher considered the Venn diagram proposed by Simmons (2015) set out in paragraph 2.5.3 and found it appropriate to adapt the model to include sponsorship.

As mentoring, counselling and coaching required accountability between the parties, sponsoring also required accountability between the sponsor and the sponsee, to each other, to the specific strategy set and to the intended outcome of the sponsored relationship (Simmons, 2015). Furthermore, where the model differed was that in sponsorship, the data revealed that the sponsor was responsible for the execution of the strategy instead of the sponsee (Payne, 2016). Finally, a sponsor required the relevant expertise, knowledge and skill to achieve the aims of the sponsored relationship (See table 7, Ranking of Qualities of the Sponsor, p 55).

The researcher therefore proposes that the diagram be remodelled to represent the four concepts of support that an individual would require. The proposed model makes the clear distinction that sponsoring is career orientated and distinguishable from mentoring, coaching or counselling. The model aligns with the three other concepts

insofar as accepting that accountability, responsibility and expertise are still common elements in all four concepts, despite their differences.

Figure 9: Proposed Adaptation of Simmonds (2015) Model



6.2.2 Sponsorship is Structured

Wasserman (2016) stated that in sponsorship, a plan or strategy needed to be formed and executed with the support of management structures. Ibarra (2010) also argued that sponsorship must be structured and/or driven by management. The McKinsey (2016) model (Figure 3, page 15) further advocated that any programme for the advancement of women must include sponsorship and be driven by the CEO and management. The data revealed that there needed to be a strategy from the beginning. Despite the fact that sponsors were the main drivers of the relationship, there existed an opportunity for a firm driven sponsorship programme that took charge of the relationship and drove the relationship. Clear goals and timelines needed to be put in a strategy on how to reach those goals.

6.2.3 Types of Sponsorship

The literature defined sponsorship as the public support of a powerful sponsor for a sponsee (Payne, 2016; Ibarra, Carter & Silva 2010; Travis, Doty & Helitzer 2013). The literature did not allude to distinctions of sponsored relationships. While the data confirmed the propositions provided by the various authors on the definition or characteristics of sponsorship, the data also revealed that there are possibly three types of sponsorship to which the characteristics can be attributed. As no theory was found for the following submission, this would be defined as new theory adding to the body of knowledge.

The first type of sponsorship was **in-team** sponsorship (termed by the researcher) where the sponsor selected a sponsee and deliberately and strategically developed the sponsee's career to advance within the team. The sponsee ultimately became a senior team member or developed a sub team within the larger team.

The second type was sponsorship within the firm but outside of the team, termed **in-firm** sponsorship (termed by the researcher). This concept enabled sponsors to identify talented sponsees within the firm, but where the sponsor was not responsible for the skills transfer and knowledge transfer to the sponsee. It is opined that the sponsor would be impressed by the sponsee through specific interaction or it could be due to transformation goals that the sponsor assisted the sponsee advance. In this model, it was only relevant for the sponsor to know that the sponsee was competent, for the sponsor to vouch for the sponsee.

The third type of sponsorship that the data revealed was **external sponsorship** (phrase termed by interviewees), where interviewees had sponsored individuals outside the firm. The relationship was deemed to have commenced either when the sponsee was a junior in the firm and who subsequently left or the sponsee could be a junior counsel requiring a senior attorney to endorse his skills set or a junior employee in the client's organisation requiring sponsorship to assist the sponsee's career advancement within the client organisation. The sponsor for a variety of reasons would then seek to advance the sponsee's career through access to networks or publicly vouching for the sponsee as in the case of a junior advocate who will get work on the endorsement of a senior attorney.

6.2.4 Senior Sponsor and Junior Sponsee

The data confirmed Manyathi-Jele's (2014) proposition that the sponsor needed to be a senior individual in the profession and who had power to influence. Hewlett and Rashid's (2010) view that the sponsee must be a junior person selected as early as possible was also confirmed by the interviewees as most sponsees were selected when they were candidate attorneys or junior associates. Sponsorship is therefore a relationship between a senior sponsor, who was powerful and experienced, and a junior sponsee. This conclusion ruled out peer mentorship or sponsorship by someone who was junior or the same age. The very nature of the sponsorship relationship called for a sponsor who had been in the profession for some time and had gained sufficient expertise and reputation.

6.2.5 Willing participants

The literature did not speak to imposed sponsorship where the sponsor was unwilling to assist the sponsee. Travis, Doty & Helitzer (2013) only alluded to relationships where the sponsor does not choose the sponsee. It appeared implicit from the literature, that sponsorship was a voluntary behaviour and driven at the instance of the sponsor (Payne, 2016). The data however espoused that an unwilling sponsor would do more harm than good and so it was proposed that a sponsor should be willing to grow and develop junior professionals. It appeared to be the same for sponsees who did not share the sponsor's strategy and expectations. The sponsee would be pushed to undertake a course of behaviour inconsistent with the sponsee's desires, and find that the experience would take its toll. Not everyone could be a sponsor and it appeared that not everyone could be sponsored.

6.2.6 Relationship of Trust

Havener (2012) commented on the need to earn the trust of clients in a legal environment for women to advance in law firms. The author identified this as a barrier without the assistance of sponsorship. Warnich (2016) also indicated that trust was an important element of the sponsorship relationship. The data confirmed that the sponsored relationship was a personal relationship where the parties had developed a level of trust and understanding (Payne, 2016).

6.2.7 Compatibility

Payne (2016) asserted that there must be a personal relationship of trust between the sponsor and the sponsee. The data revealed that there must be compatibility between the parties. A sponsorship relationship required the sponsor to vouch for the sponsee and advance the sponsee's career without feeling threatened by the sponsee. The data further revealed that a successful sponsored relationship was one in which the parties were honest about addressing challenges and deficiencies. The interviewees spoke of "take under my wing" as a synonym of caring for the individual's career and growth.

6.2.8 Advancing women

The CALS study (Manyathi-Jele, 2014) and the McKinsey (2016) study both concluded that sponsorship was one of the enablers to advancing women. The data confirmed that all sponsees interviewed had advanced in the firm as a result of a sponsored relationship. Despite references to 'the old boys club', sponsors acknowledged that there was a legislative imperative to advance women onto the boards of law firms. There appeared to be a distinct preference to working with women as some of the sponsors had all female teams. This confirmed the findings of Kay & Wallace (2010) that women are more likely to receive mentoring than men in law firms.

6.2.9 Transfer trust

Warnich (2015) introduced the concept of trust in mentorship. Havener (2012) argued that relationships with clients were built on trust. Trust was defined as a characteristic or requirement of the sponsored relationship (Payne 2016). The concept of transferring trust was a recurrent theme in the interviews. The law firm environment was considered to be an environment where relationships are built on trust. These trust relationships build reputations, as lawyers get more senior in the profession, which occurs over the lifespan of the lawyer's career. In sponsoring a junior, the sponsor effectively transfers the trust placed in the sponsor by the firm, the partnership, the profession and the clients, to the sponsee, without the sponsee having to earn that trust.

6.2.10 The expectations of the sponsee

Wasserman (2016) argued that it was the responsibility of the sponsee to take control of opportunities presented. Travis, Doty & Helitzer (2013) stated that sponsees needed to have a clear goal or ambition to progress. The data confirmed that expectations and

goals of the sponsee are vital to the success of a sponsored relationship. In firm sponsored programmes, the expectations of the sponsee appeared less important to the firm's expectation. This assertion confirmed the role of expectancy theory in assisting in understanding how the expectations of the sponsee are relevant in achieving the goals of the sponsored relationship.

6.2.11 Sponsorship works in law firms

A number of authors confirmed that sponsorship was an effective enabler to advancing women in their organisations (Ibarra, Carter & Silva, 2010). Law firms have a pyramid structure and place juniors at the bottom and seniors at the top. Progression through each level was clearly defined and so the environment was ideal to place seniors in a position to pull juniors through the ranks to partner. Kay & Wallace (2010) concluded that mentorship was more effective in medium and large firms due to the organisational culture that supported the associate-to-partner model of advancement.

Secondly, the law firm environment was a training environment (Havener, 2012). Law firms are obliged to take in graduates as candidate attorneys and train them. The so-called "bright stars" (Ibarra, Carter & Silva 2010) were identified and retained in the firm where their talent was developed. Skills transfer remained the first element of sponsorship.

Thirdly, law firms are built on complex networks within the firm and outside the firm. A sponsee was expected to plug into those networks to be able to grow an independent practice. A sponsor facilitated that connection.

Finally the trend in the legal profession in South Africa showed more females entering the profession and looking for advancement within law firms (LSSA, 2016; Campbell, 2012). The old boys' networks and outdated management policies would need to be revised to address the gender imbalance in the workforce.

6.2.12 Conclusion

The data substantiated many of the assertions provided by the literature review. The research provided a clear definition of sponsorship together with the qualities or characteristics of the sponsored relationship. The study provided new insights into the different types of sponsorship described by the interviewees and informed a model and a toolkit.

6.3 Research Question 2

TO WHAT EXTENT DOES THE FIRM OR MANAGEMENT INHIBIT OR ENCOURAGE THE SPONSORED RELATIONSHIP?

6.3.1 Firm Driven programmes

McKinsey (2016) advocated for gender parity programmes to be driven and managed by the executive management of the organisation. This was confirmed by Manyathi-Jele (2014) who argued that advancement of women was not a human resource function but a board imperative. Role incongruity theory determined that the institutional ideology or organisational culture of the firm defined what type of work women should do. There appeared to be a distinctive paradigm shift as the sponsors had commenced sponsoring and advancing women almost 20 years ago (Hoyt, 2012; Ibarra, Ely & Kolb, 2013).

An important observation to this phenomena was that all male sponsors interviewed admitted to having all-female teams, indicating that if the dominant thought ideology changed, then female lawyers roles changed and female lawyers become more attractive for retention in teams.

The McKinsey report on improving gender diversity in the workplace 2015/2016 at paragraph 2.3.3 in the literature review, argued that an ecosystem was required that was built on institutional support from management and the board of directors. The data confirmed that management was either the drivers of the programme or were intricately involved in the efficacy of the programmes and supported Payne (2016)'s assertion that the sponsorship relationship required recognition, leadership and support from management.

6.3.2 Expectations – Set goals

Wasserman's (2016) argument was reiterated by the data. The expectations of sponsors and sponsees needed to be structured into a strategy and for both parties to set goals to reach certain mile stones and achieve the goals. Path-goal theory dictated that the leader and the follower needed to align their expectations and goals for the benefit of the organisation. In this case, the data confirmed that strategies were aligned to the career path progression set by management. Communication was also ranked highly and the data indicated that there were ongoing discussions

and interaction between sponsors and sponsees regarding whether goals were met or whether strategies were revised.

6.3.3 Discrimination

Manyathi-Jele (2014) outlined that a number of participants in the research undertaken by CALS indicated that they experienced discrimination on the basis of gender as a barrier to advancement (Ibarra, Ely & Kolb, 2013). The data did not support this finding. All sponsees confirmed that they found management, including heads of departments, supportive of the advancement of the sponsees. It was intimated that the sponsored relationship provided the protection against these barriers that unsponsored women experienced (Ibarra, Ely & Kolb, 2013; Pringle et al., 2017).

6.3.4 Trend of Medium to Large Firm

Kay & Wallace (2010) argued that mentorship programmes, of which sponsorship was one, was regarded as more effective in medium and large law firms. The reason for this was the number of lawyers available to participate but also because of the pyramid structure of advancement to partnership. This research study only focussed on medium and large law firms and it was evident that sponsorship was a concept well understood by the interviewees as an enabler to career advancement. A firm managed programme of sponsorship would be able to streamline the interests of the firm to the interests of junior professionals.

6.3.5 Conclusion

The data confirmed the literature recommendations that a firm managed sponsorship programme in medium and large law firms would be an effective enabler to the advancement of women.

6.4 Research Question 3

IN WHAT WAY DOES THE SPONSOR EXERT STRONG INFLUENCE IN DETERMINING THE CAREER PATH OF THE SPONSEE?

6.4.1 Characteristics of Sponsor

Manyathi-Jele propositioned that the sponsor needed to have a source of power. This source could be seniority in the workplace, a position of authority i.e. management or head of department or it could be a position of influence i.e. a high fee earner. It was a powerful leader that could advance an agenda for gender diversity and inclusion. The data revealed that all sponsors fit the qualities of a powerful leader. Powerful, influential persons within an organisation are best placed to sponsor individuals. The sponsors interviewed were influential, powerful individuals who had already sponsored numerous individuals and it appeared endemic to the character of the individual to do so.

The data confirmed the theory of servant leadership (Robbins & Judge, 2015) where the sponsor advanced the sponsee with no benefit to the sponsor. Firm managed programmes would need to identify such individuals in the organisation and match them with equally ambitious sponsees.

6.4.2 Sponsor driven skills transfer / Sponsor driven competency building / Sponsor driven networking / Sponsor driven promotions

Networking was essential to assist women advance in organisations (Hewlett & Rashid, 2010; Ibarra, Ely & Kolb, 2013). Skills development and promotions were elements of the agenda for advancement of women. Social cognitive theory was tested and the data revealed that the institutional ideology of the firm had altered or changed to allow women to be sponsored to leadership roles within the firm. The data revealed that sponsors drove the agenda for the advancement of female lawyers. All male lawyers displayed a preference for female team members. Sponsors held the key to the success of the sponsored relationship.

6.4.3 Conclusion

A strong, influential and powerful sponsor was pivotal to the sponsorship relationship and was the main driver of the sponsored relationship.

6.5 Research Question 4

WHAT QUALITIES DID THE SPONSEE POSSESS THAT ASSISTED HER TO REACH THE CAREER GOALS IN THE SPONSORED RELATIONSHIP?

6.5.1 Qualities of a sponsee

Kay & Wallace (2010) indicated that the sponsee must be career-focussed and must have a strong internal locus of control with regard to career advancement. Successful, highly ambitious women must be selected for sponsorship (Ibarra, Carter & Silva, 2010). The Bain report (2017) set out the qualities of a successful women revealed by its research.

The data revealed that all sponsees advanced through certain mandatory merit based criteria. Secondly, all interviewees were able to differentiate the sponsees qualities from those of the sponsors. Thirdly, sponsors indicated that sponsees had to assert leadership qualities before the sponsor would invest in the sponsee. Finally, sponsees needed to be self-driven and ambitious. The data confirmed that self-actualisation theory and self-efficacy theory (Robbins & Judge, 2015) played a huge role in getting commitment from sponsees to the sponsored journey.

6.5.2 A merit based approach

The literature review indicated that a merit based approach was no longer relevant when it came to advancing women (Dowd-Higgins, 2013; Wasserman, 2016; Bernal, 2017). This was not confirmed by the data. Unanimously all interviewees indicated that the merit based approach was the only approach. Those that considered alternatives indicated that while the thought of all women receiving the same opportunities was ideal, this would not happen due to the competitive nature of the profession. Others indicated that it reflected negatively on the competency of the female if any other approach instead of the merit based approach was utilised. Pringle et al. (2017) confirmed that while junior females in law firms indicated that the current system for assessment or selection for advancement was inadequate, senior female lawyers

confirmed that the merit based system was fair and were reluctant to change, endorsing the merits based approach (Ibarra, Carter & Silva, 2010).

6.5.3 Conclusion

Female lawyers who wanted to advance to partnership in law firms required a strong locus of control, an ambition to succeed and a strategy which was career focussed.

6.6 Additional Constructs

6.6.1 All male interviewees have all female teams

The literature review did not comment on whether female attorneys were a preferential choice. However, an observation in the research was that all males interviewed had exclusively female teams. The inference to be drawn was that women worked well and produced a good product. Some of the sponsees had been sponsored for a period in excess of ten years which meant that those sponsors had spent a significant amount of time transforming the team. The male sponsors indicated a preference to working with women. Women worked hard and paid attention to detail.

Coupled with the trend that there was a feminisation of the profession (LSSA, 2016; Campbell & Charlesworth, 2012) and that law firms are conglomerating into large multinational organisations, it was anticipated that the legal profession of the future would look substantially different from that of the present. Should the trend continue then advancement of women would be inevitable. However Fitzsimmons' (2012) recommendations should be heeded, that advancing women to leadership positions without equipping them to lead, not only sets the women for failure but weakens the legal profession.

6.6.2 Work-life balance or work-life alignment

The concept of work life balance was considered by a number of female interviewees when the issue of the merit based approach to sponsorship and advancement was dealt with. Some spoke of having no balance and others spoke of the concept as an ideal that was impossible to attain, given the rigours of a legal practice. There appeared to be more support for the "opt out" revolution (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005) by younger sponsees than those that appeared to be senior in the profession.

Despite wanting work-life balance, all interviewees had reached partnership and had all chosen the route of meeting career goals or organisational goals first. Parkes & Langford's (2008) proposition of work-life alignment instead of work life balance appeared to be favoured. If an employee aligned his/her values with the values and the purpose of the law firm, then the employee became engaged and found satisfaction in their role. This appeared to be the case with all interviewees in that work-life alignment was achieved through the sponsored relationships.

6.6.3 Person with most potential to earn more money must be released to do so

The "billable hours" model (Campbell & Charlesworth, 2012) was criticised by the interviewees as being inadequate to assess lawyers and their contribution to the law firm environment. As debited fees were still the measure of a lawyer's contribution, a point raised by an interviewee was relevant to possible future research. The interviewee argued that the traditional model of role congruity theories and social cognitive theories had no place in society. A theory around potential, skills and ability, must be developed to recognise that the person with the most potential in a family unit to earn the higher income must be released to do so. This theory would challenge the traditional barriers faced by women of having to curtail a career due to motherhood and child rearing.

The interviewee argued that as the law recognised that both parents have equal parental rights and obligations to the child, irrespective of gender (Republic of South Africa, 2005), the parent with the potential to advance within their career and provide better for the family should do so and the one with the lesser opportunity to advance should assume the greater share of child rearing responsibilities. This was one of the challenges also raised in the research of Pringle et al. (2017).

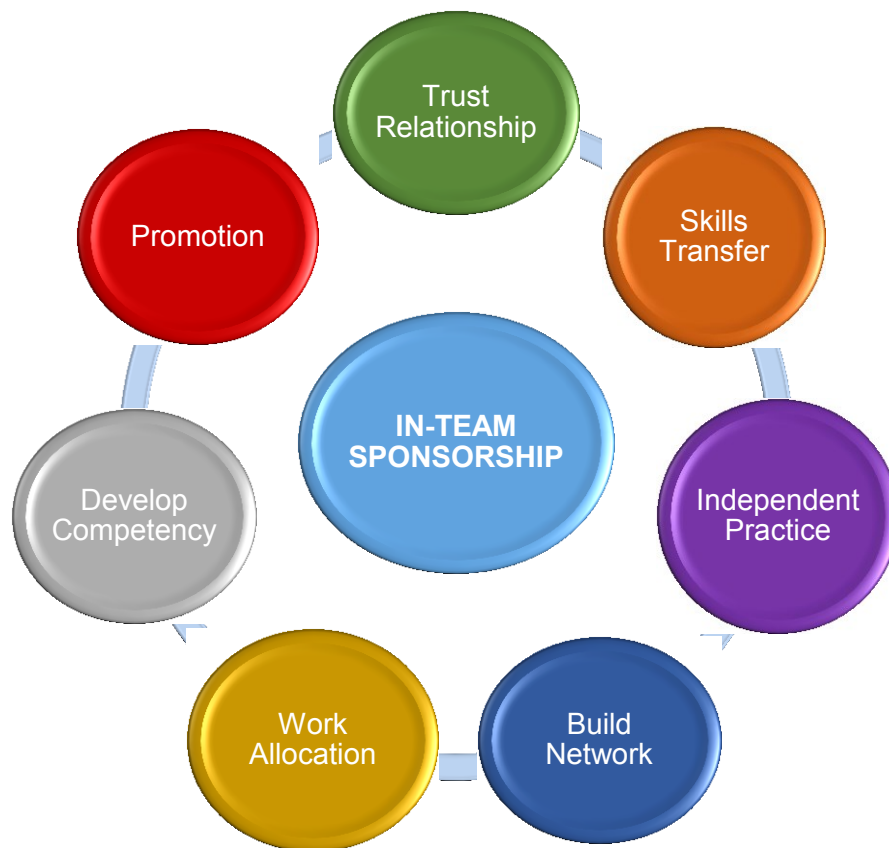
6.7 Conclusion

The literature and the data confirmed the need for a firm managed sponsorship programme that was driven by management but executed by senior partners in law firms. The data revealed that the most popular type of sponsorship was the concept of in-team sponsorship. This type of sponsorship was distinguished from sponsorship in general and focussed on a senior sponsor within a team who takes a junior sponsee "under his wing". The data supported the literature and revealed that the sponsored relationship was characterised by the following metrics, qualities or milestones :-

- Skills transfer
- relationship of trust
- work allocation
- complex or complicated work to develop competencies
- promotion
- build a network
- independent practice

The researcher consolidated these characteristics and proposes Figure 10 below as a depiction of in-team sponsorship.

Figure 10: Proposed Model for In-team Sponsorship



This model can be translated into a toolkit that law firms can utilise to structure a sponsorship programme around. The toolkit was informed by the literature as well as the data findings and conclusions. It is recommended that the toolkit form part of a strategic agenda for the advancement of women in law firms.

The toolkit comprises of six pillars of support.

Pillar 1: Institutional support

Institutional support speaks to the institutional ideology or organisational culture of the firm. The McKinsey Report (2016) indicated that programmes for the advancement of women must be driven by the CEO and management. In this regard, the firm would have to review and adapt or create policies that would provide a framework to promote and incentivise sponsorship. Secondly, the firm would have to create structures to match sponsors with sponsees. Finally, the firm need to create measurable goals or milestones that the sponsored teams would need to achieve.

Pillar 2: Vocational Support

Vocational support related to the recommendations made by Havener (2012) and Payne (2016) and confirmed by the data, that skills development was an important aspect of the sponsored relationship. The data revealed that skills development related to practice development, leadership training and competency building. The second pillar creates a framework for sponsees to receive internal and external vocational training that would advance them to the next level in their career development.

Pillar 3: Networking

Wasserman (2016) argued that building networks from the beginning was essential for sponsees to advance. Ibarra & Hunter (2007) asserted that these must be strategic networks that advanced one's career or created new business. This pillar provides a platform for a firm to create internal and external networks focussed on women, with the aim of introducing female lawyers to the existing or potential client base, over and above the sponsors efforts. This pillar would also create opportunities for networking by allowing women to attend conferences, marketing events and/or external training in order to build those networks

Pillar 4: Personal Relationship

Travis, Doty and Helitzer (2013) argued that sponsorship was the public advocacy of a sponsee by the sponsor. In order for sponsors to be able to fulfil this function, the parties must develop a relationship of trust. A trust relationship is created when a sponsor and a sponsee are compatible and complement each other. In this regard, a firm managed programme would be able to match the right sponsor with the right

sponsee to ensure compatibility. Once matched, it was the responsibility of the sponsor and the sponsee to grow a relationship of trust.

Pillar 5: Promotion

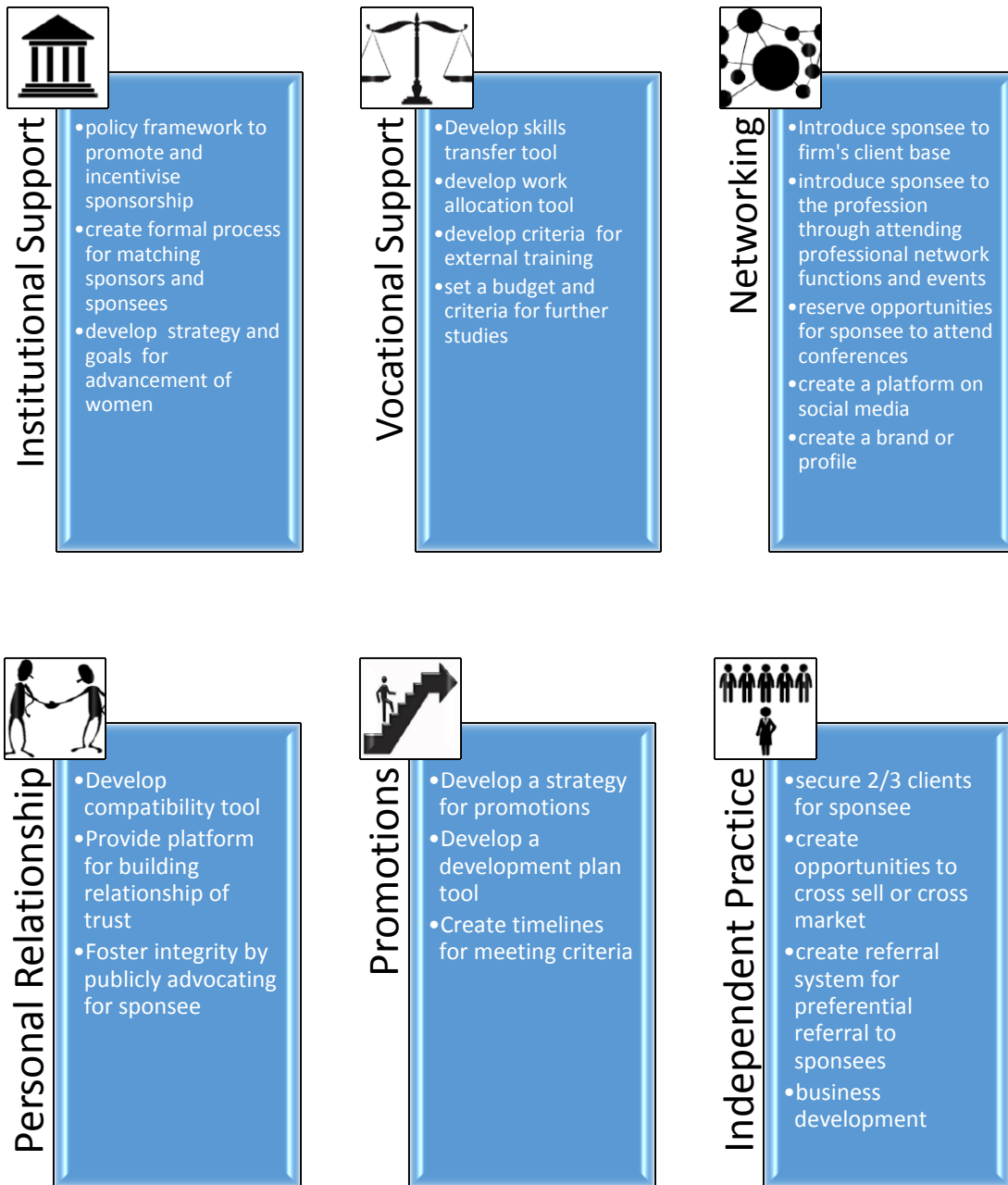
McKinsey (2016) stated that recruitment, promotion and retention were fundamental to the advancement of women. The human resource function of the firm was to ensure that clear criteria were set for promotions. This pillar speaks to creating clear criteria for promotions, creating a strategy to meet the criteria, putting in place a development plan to deal with deficiencies in the sponsee's practice, and creating timeframes to meet the objectives.

Pillar 6: Independent Practice

The final pillar speaks to the ultimate goal or objective of sponsorship i.e. for the sponsee to be able to advance to partnership and to develop an independent practice. A firm managed programme would build in this metric for sponsors to secure for the sponsee new clients or create the opportunity with a potential client for the sponsee to secure new clients. The firm can also create a system for preferential referral of work or business development to sponsees so that an independent client base can be established for the sponsee

The researcher therefore proposes the following toolkit.

Figure 11: A proposed Sponsorship Toolkit



CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

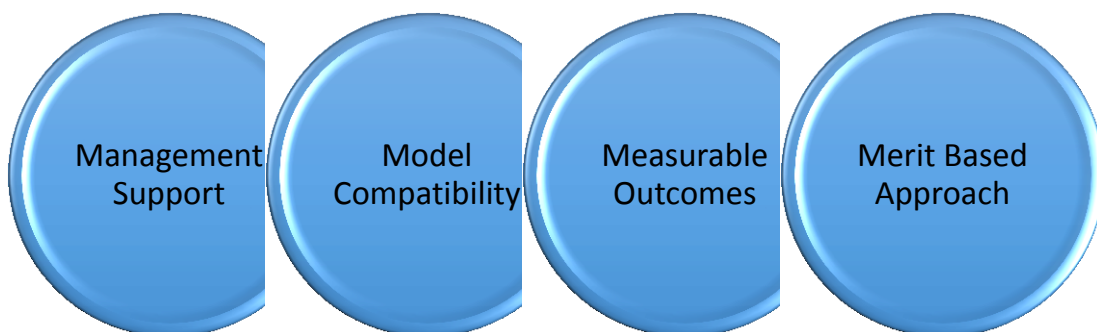
7.1 Introduction

The objective of this research paper was to research the concept of sponsorship as an enabler to advancing women in law firms. The research problem stated that while there are more women graduating from law firms and entering the legal profession, gender disparity at board level was still evident. The literature review indicated that those women who had succeeded had done so as a result of sponsorship. In order to understand the concept of sponsorship and how it advanced women in the law firm context, the researcher undertook an inductive qualitative study of sponsors and sponsees through interviews based on questions derived from various themes that presented itself through the literature review.

7.2 Implications for Law Firms

Having considered the data and the inputs by the interviewees, the researcher proposes that law firms contemplating the advancement of women, consider the **4-M Framework for Sponsorship** (termed by the researcher) depicted in figure 12 below.

Figure 12: Proposed 4-M Framework for Sponsorship



The figure is explained below.

7.2.1 Management Support and Senior partner driven

Senior partners (sponsors) drive sponsorship in law firms (Manyathi-Jele, 2014). Sponsorship is therefore a partnership prerogative and is not driven by human resources personnel. Management is required to provide a supportive environment and ecosystem (McKinsey, 2016) to be able to measure the efficacy of the programme but to also measure the growth, development and advancement of the sponsee.

7.2.2 Model compatibility on Theory of Needs

A management model looking to attract powerful sponsors should be based on McClelland's theory of needs (Royle & Hall, 2012). As sponsors are also motivated by McClelland's needs, management will need to ascertain the correct motivator for sponsors and match them with the corresponding motivators for sponsees. The correct 'needs' matching will provide a foundation of compatibility for the team to build the sponsored relationship on. Royle & Hall (2012) argued that the needs theory develops an informal accountability and responsibility for team members. In other words, sponsors would become responsible and accountable for the success of the sponsee.

The researcher provides a framework for the compatibility model as follows :-

If the sponsor is high on the Affiliation need, the sponsor would choose friendly and close relationships. This sponsor would make ideal managers and are more team orientated in their approach (Royle & Hall, 2012). The ideal sponsee to be matched with this sponsor is one who is junior and requires skills development, knowledge transfer, building of confidence and competence. In this scenario the sponsor and the sponsee's expectations would be aligned. This sponsor is ideal for teaching and training and is recommended to be the first level sponsor in a firm managed sponsorship programme.

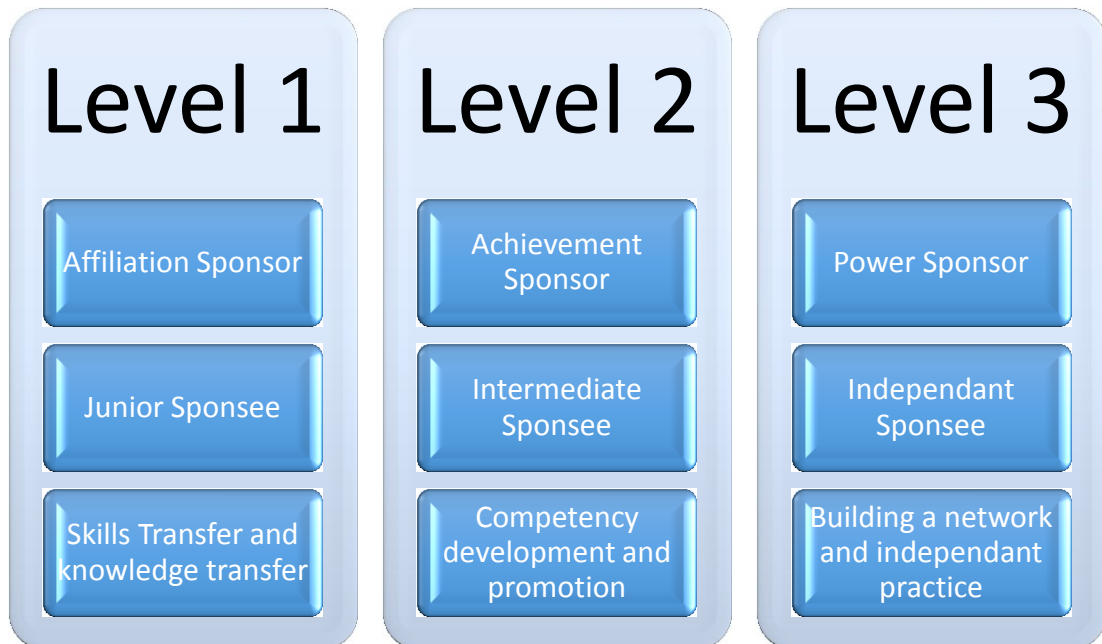
If the sponsor is high on the Achievement need then the sponsor values competition and achievement. This sponsor will push to excel to some established standard or driven to exceed goals. The need is satisfied when sponsors are able to actualise their purpose relative to others (Royle & Hall, 2012). This means that they will be more competitive to get their sponsees to reach goals and milestones quicker. A sponsor high on achievement needs to be rewarded with a goal driven ambitious

sponsee who will match the sponsor's drive for achievement and competitiveness. Sponsees who are already competent and do not require skills transfer, sponsees who are at an intermediate level or sponsees who are eligible for partnership should be matched with an Achievement sponsor to advance to the next level in their career progression. This sponsor is recommended to be the second level sponsor in a firm managed sponsorship programme.

If the sponsor is high on the Power need, the sponsor is influential and will seek positions of power. These sponsors are the authoritative sponsors that can compel action from management or clients (Royle & Hall, 2012). The sponsee to be matched to this sponsor is one who is looking to build an independent practice or attract new clients. This sponsor is recommended to be the final level sponsor in a firm managed sponsorship programme.

A compatibility model is therefore proposed by the researcher for the matching of sponsors and sponsees, reflected in Figure 13.

Figure 13: Compatibility model based on McClelland's Theory of Needs



7.2.3 Measurable outcomes

The quote that "you can't manage what you can't measure" is often attributed to Peter Drucker, however Zak (2013) explained that what Drucker meant was that "Work implies not only that somebody is supposed to do the job, but also accountability, a deadline and, finally, the measurement of results - that is, feedback from results on the work and on the planning process itself" (p 1).

In this regard, there must be measurement tools to measure the efficacy of sponsorship programmes and whether it achieves the objectives of advancing women. All interviewees indicated that management supported the sponsored relationship but only two law firms interviewed had embarked on a firm managed programme to advance women. In its pilot phase, they both acknowledged that they could not report on results until they were able to gather sufficient data from their programmes to be able to see whether it worked.

In addition measuring these programmes will provide opportunities to learn and revise them to meet the needs of the sponsee and the firm. A work allocation programme that measures how busy individuals are on a weekly basis and then ensures that all juniors have the same level of "busyness" and are acquiring the same rate of skills so that they can be assessed equally, is imperative. Despite the inadequacy of the billable hour's model, it remains an established metric for measurement of performance. It is a suggestion for future research that an alternate model for assessment be developed that takes into account these elements as well as the needs of the sponsee for flexibility and work life alignment.

7.2.4 Merit Based

All advancement was merit based. The selection of sponsees for sponsored relationships must be based on identifying talent or bright stars within the organisation. Law firms will need to employ the brightest and the most ambitious women to meet employment equity targets and advance more women to partnership.

7.3 Research Limitations

Qualitative research is subjective and is affected by a number of biases (Saunders & Lewis, 2012; Zikmund et al., 2013). In addition, the interviewer has inappropriate training in interviewing for research purposes and this may have affected the

interviewees' responses (Agee, 2009). The following additional limitations are identified:

7.3.1 The interviewees interviewed were only those in established sponsored relationships existing in medium and large corporate law firms.

7.3.2 The interviewees interviewed were all attorneys practising as attorneys and the sample was not extended to counsel at the bar nor to general counsel or group legal advisors working in corporate environments, nor were they attorneys working in legal clinics or NGO's or working as legal advisors in any capacity nor as paralegals, judges or magistrates.

7.3.3 The interviewees interviewed were restricted to those that had attained a level of seniority. In this case it was proposed that the sponsee would be from the level of a salaried partner upwards to be able to capture the length and impact of the relationship. One of the interviewees, however, was a senior associate who was part of a firm managed sponsorship programme and she was requested by the firm to attend the interview.

7.3.4 The research does have a gender bias and looked at relationships where the sponsee is a female. The results may be different if there was more diversity in terms of sponsees interviewed.

7.3.5 The data collected was about the interviewees' individual experiences and so it depended on the level of introspection that the interviewees had into the sponsorship experience (Polkinghorne, 2005).

7.3.6 All interviewees, except two, practice in Johannesburg. Two were attorneys who practice in Cape Town. Of those that practised in Johannesburg, all were located in Sandton with the exception of one whose office was in Rosebank. There was a geographical bias in the data collection.

7.4 Recommendations for Future Research

The researcher proposes that the following would be topics for future research :-

7.4.1. Whether organisational culture is a catalyst to the advancement women in law firms.

7.4.2. A profitability analysis and comparison of women sponsored by men versus women sponsored by women.

- 7.4.3. An alternative model to assessing a lawyer's contribution outside of the "billable hours" model.
- 7.4.4. Sponsorship as an enabler for the advancement of women, looking at the entire legal profession.
- 7.4.5 A theory around potential, skills and ability, must be developed to recognise that the person with the most potential in a family unit to earn the higher income must be released to do so.

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APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

Sponsorship as an enabler for advancing Women in Law Firms

Researcher: Candice Pillay, MBA Student at the Gordon Institute of Business Science,
University of Pretoria

Name of Participant: _____

Organisation of Participant: _____

1. I confirm that I understand what the research is about and that I have had the opportunity to ask questions
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I can withdraw at any time without giving reason
3. I agree to take part in the research
4. I agree to my interview being audio recorded
5. I agree to the use of anonymised quotations in publications

Participant's Name: _____

Signature: _____

Researcher's Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

(Saunders & Lewis, 2012)

APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

Name:

Start Time:

Organisation:

End Time:

Job Title:

Date:

Thank you for agreeing to meet with me today. I really appreciate your time and input into this research.

The title of the research is '**Sponsorship as an enabler for advancing Women in Law Firms**'

The key objective of this research is:

- What are the requirements for a successful sponsored relationship?
- To what extent is the firm responsible for the success of the sponsored relationship?
- In what ways does the sponsor exert strong influence in determining the career path of the sponsee?
- What qualities did the sponsee possess that assisted her reach the career goals in the sponsored relationship?

The nature of this research and interview is both conversational and exploratory. I would like to encourage you to speak freely and be confident in the fact that the information shared in this interview will be confidential and you will remain anonymous.

Before we begin, may I ask you to please sign the consent form and can you please confirm that you are happy for me to record the interview using an audio recording device?

Theme 1 : Understanding sponsorship

Question 1:

What is your understanding of the concept of sponsorship?

Question 2:

What do you believe the characteristics of a sponsored relationship are?

Question 3:

How relevant or important are the individual's expectations and goals as opposed to the team or firm's expectations of a sponsored relationship?

Question 4:

Why do you think sponsorship works in law firms?

Theme 2 : Institutional Ideology or Organisational Culture

Question 5:

What/who drives mentorship/sponsorship in your organisation?

Potential Prompts that could be used in the interview	
Management driven initiative	
Team dynamic/demands	
Sponsor	
Sponsee	

Question 6:

How did you engage in the sponsored relationship?

Question 7:

What were your expectations at the start of the relationship?

Question 8:

How did management react to the sponsored relationship?

Theme 3 : Qualities of the Sponsor

Question 9:

What characteristics of the sponsor made him/her able to influence?

Question 10:

Was there a strategy or directive that was discussed and applied by the sponsor?

Question 11:

Was there skills transfer from sponsor to sponsee?

Question 12:

How did work in advanced or complex work take place? Who initiated this conversation?

Question 13:

How was the introduction to clients or potential clients facilitated?

Question 14:

What was the expectation on the sponsor / sponsee when introductions to clients or potential clients were made?

Question 15:

Was promotion expected or discussed in the relationship? How was it facilitated?

Theme 4 : Qualities of the Sponsee

Question 16:

How did the sponsee relate to skills development?

Question 17:

What qualities of the sponsee assisted with building a network?

Question 18:

Did the sponsee get promoted? How did that come about?

Question 19:

Was the sponsee's advancement as a result of a merit based award?

APPENDIX 3: ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER

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

29 June 2017

Candice Pillay

Dear Candice,

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

You are therefore allowed to continue collecting your data.

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

Kind Regards

GIBS MBA Research Ethical Clearance Committee

APPENDIX 4: TURNITIN RESULTS

APPENDIX 5: LIST OF CODES

List of Codes Generated by the Data

- 1 **senior person**
 - senior partner
 - (person/sponsor/lawyer/attorney)
 - senior and juniors
 - senior helps you through the door
 - senior partners interest
 - qualified
 - older male partner

- 2 **experienced sponsor**
 - more experienced sponsor

- 3 **support**
 - tangible support
 - supportive
 - support them
 - firm did accomodate me later
 - flexibility for women

- 4 **accountability for success**

- 5 **tenure in team**
 - tenure

- 6 **intellectual connection**
- 7 **mentally strong sponsee**
- 8 **succession of sponsee**

- 9 **assessment**
 - check assessment

- 10 **goal orientated**
 - set goals

- 11 **communciation**
 - positive feedback
 - discuss future
 - discuss strategy in case
 - discussed at all levels
 - discussed by sponsor

discussion
discussion on goals
discussion with sponsor
constant engagement
constant interaction
keep contact
keep him in the loop

12 **personal expectations from sponsee**

13 **addressing success**

14 **succession**

15 **trust**

trusted me
trust of the partnership
trust of the clients
trustworthy

16 **motivated**

17 **competence (includes competent)**

skilled
work on complex matters
want sponsee to learn
competence to build
more senior you are the bigger the matters you get

18 **no competence**

19 **understand clients needs**

what clients want
what clients need

20 **pride**

21 **importance of clients**

22 **meet criteria (meet the requirements)**

selection criteria
promotion due to fees
objectives to meet
met goals

23 **share work**

share clients
shares contacts
working with sponsor

working with junior
willing to share
pitching together for clients
not concerned about giving work away
generous with clients
involve in matters

24 **available sponsor (includes availability)**

25 **communication of goals**

26 **skills transfer**

transfer competence
skills transfer during articles
skills transfer on new instructions
skills transfer through advice
skills transfer through strategy on matters
new lawyers must be taught
free training from experts

27 **profitability**

profitable for the team
sponsorship is profitability
fees
lots of fees

28 **technology smart**

29 **efficient**

30 **compliment each other with clients**

31 **not firm driven**

management opposed to sponsorship

32 **problem promoting female**

33 **opposition by other females - queen bee**

34 **influence people**

35 **own client base**

had own clients

36 **own practice**

37 **sponsor in management**

sat on Exco
was in management
head of department

part of management

- 38 **proactive**
take initiative

- 39 **strategy**
process to promotion
strategy outline
yes strategy
strategy for sponsorship
sponsor strategy for competence
plan / strategy
plan by sponsor
plan for me
plan in place
ongoing strategy
formal model (includes plan or programme)
from the beginning

- 40 **goals**

- 41 **sponsee have own vision**
strategy around me

- 42 **compatibility**
similar personality
there was compatibility
connection
connection to the sponsee
good fit

- 43 **adapted to work**
- 44 **personal relationship**
- 45 **complex work driven by sponsor**

- 46 **strategy for competence set out by sponsor**
strategy to achieve goal
strategy on methodology
strategy on litigation
sponsor strategy on complex work

- 47 **readiness of sponsee**

- 48 **assistance to reach goal**
accommodate sponsee
assistance from senior
assistance in profession

- 49 **abilities of sponsee**
- 50 **beneficial to sponsee**
- 51 **sponsee embraced skills transfer**
passionate when asked for complex work
willing recipient
- 52 **competence from beginning**
throw people in deep end
complex matters from the start
complex work from beginning
complex work part of the programme
advance work from the onset
all sponsees work on complex matters
competence is also part of training
- 53 **manner different to sponsor**
- 54 **forthright**
- 55 **all sponsors male historically**
appoint men sponsors
- 56 **protege**
- 57 **promotion planned for tenure**
- 58 **confidence in her abilities**
build confidence
confidence in her
- 59 **ambitious sponsee**
sponsee's goals
sponsee driven success
smart about growth
risk taker
she got my attention
professional
contribute talent
contribute to consultation
contributing to practice
- 60 **used sponsor's network to build her own**
- 61 **guidance**
- 62 **promotion earned**
- 63 **sponsor set a strategy for promotion**

strategy by sponsor

64 **merits based**
earned my place

65 **determination**

66 **sponsor driven success**
sponsor driven complex work
Sponsor would do it

67 **under my wing**

68 **development**
willing to develop
develop careers
develop competence
develop good relationships
develop network
develop network together
develop own client base
develop own clients
develop sub skills
constant advancement intellectually
constant development

69 **training**
skills training
training and promoting
train and appoint right people
sponsor training
proper training
best training
director training

70 **Mentorship**
similar to mentorship
mentorship is basic encounters daily
mentorship is personal issues
over and above mentorship
conduct yourself in the firm - mentorship

71 **understand needs of sponsee**

72 **help me reach goals**
help

help them develop
help within the firm
helps with brand

- 73 **know their deficiencies**
- 74 **barriers to development**
- 75 **affirmation of sponsee**
- 76 **ask for help**
- 77 **deal with challenges**
- 78 **external sponsor**
- 79 **confidence (includes confident)**
- 80 **successful practice**
- 81 **need help**

- 82 **gives you a break**
not get squeezed out
have my back

- 83 **technical ability (includes expertise)**
quality lawyer
quality

- 84 **practice management**
client management
managing clients
how to deal with people

- 85 **step into shoes**
emulate senior (includes him or them)

- 86 **understand discrimination**
- 87 **introduced to clients**
- 88 **management no reaction / not involved/ no negative
perception / no interference / no response**
management did not respond

- 89 driven by management

- 90 **formal sponsorship fails**
doesn't cater for individual aspirations

- 91 **informal sponsorship**
- 92 **deliberative intervention**
- 93 **rules**

- 94 **potential for growth of sponsee**

recognised my potential
potential of sponsee
identified potential
identify worthy candidates

95 **hear good things**

96 **objective**
not just women, everyone

97 **individual consideration**
not important what management wants
not an assembly line

98 **do my work well**
do my best

99 **knowledge transfer**
willing to learn
expand knowledge

100 **process that develops**
101 **complaints by management**
102 **expense of other team members**

103 **disturbed team dynamic (includes disruption of team or peer dynamic)**
opposition from partners
team not supportive
backlash from peers
negative reaction from juniors

104 **successful**
want to see them succeed
success

105 **good qualities**

106 **caring**
care over my career
never stab you in the back

107 **listen**

108 **time**

109 **characteristics that draw people to you**

110 **combination strategy**

111 **not formal**

- 112 **address issues/weaknesses/deficiencies**
 - identify deficiencies (include shortcomings)
 - challenges or deficiencies (includes deficiencies)
 - guidance on deficiencies

- 113 **assistance to sponsee**
 - facilitation

- 114 **alignment of sponsee needs to team needs**
- 115 **tools**
- 116 **build network immediately**

- 117 **transfer trust**
 - sponsor endorsed sponsee with clients

- 118 **get work on my own**

- 119 **milestones to reach**
 - reaching milestones
 - year on year goals

- 120 **honest feedback**
 - discuss consequences of promotion

- 121 **skills development**
 - skills developed to strengths
 - skills development part of mentorship
 - skills development through advice
 - correcting skills development

- 122 **honest communication**

- 123 **individual flair**
 - individual strategy reflects individual goals
 - individual's goal aligned to organisation
 - individuals need important

- 124 **good with people**

- 125 **learn to network**
 - learn

- 126 **sponsee initiated discussions**

- 127 **sponsor initiated**
 - Sponsor had expectations

- 128 **responsibility**
- 129 **serious**

- 130 **introduce junior to the profession**
deal with opponents

- 131 **quality of work**
- 132 **meet clients needs**
- 133 **time management**

- 134 **billable hours (includes billings)**
hard profession

- 135 **introduce to client early on**
- 136 **build competence/expertise**

- 137 **opportunity**
fair chance

- 138 **contribution**
- 139 **senior backing you**

- 140 **work life balance**
balance (includes holistic)
family more important
life interests

- 141 **sponsee's expectations**
need someone to back you
needed to be introduced to his network
expressed goal to advance
important to know juniors expectations/what junior wants

- 142 **achieve with career**

- 143 **independence of sponsees**
independent practice

- 144 **strong relationship**
- 145 **give and take**
- 146 **mentored**

- 147 **growth**
personal growth

watch them grow
accelerating growth
growing
growth in firm
growth in individual
interest in growth

148 **daily interaction**

149 **sponsee driven to make it work**

sponsee enjoyed skills development
reminds them gently
do pro amico work
do work
don't want to disappoint
drive your own career
excel at the work given
excited to learn

150 **interested**

151 **build my own client base /network**

pressure to engage more clients
sponsor's clients became my clients
build network within the firm
build own networks
build relationships
my network different to sponsor's
get work from clients
gets his own work
interact
interacts with clients

152 **business plan**

153 **she saw her career not just articles**

154 **climb the ladder**

155 **make contacts**

156 **upset team dynamics**

157 **management support**

speak to management to ensure needs met
management relaxed
management reviews
management supportive
highly favoured by management

158 **involved with clients**

- 159 **honesty**
open and approachable
open/ honest
- 160 **integrity**
- 161 **patience**
- 162 **persevere**
- 163 **expert authority**
more knowledgeable
- 164 **punt / vouch for people**
vouches for you
- 165 **knowledgeable**
- 166 **teamwork**
within team dynamic
team dynamics
team
buddy system
- 167 **try their best**
- 168 **new skills**
- 169 **positive feedback from clients**
- 170 **immediate introduction to clients**
- 171 **skills development from beginning**
- 172 **approached sponsor (includes approachable)**
- 173 **people skills**
- 174 **bubbly personality**
- 175 **good product**
- 176 **clients trust me**
- 177 **relationship**
professional relationship
ongoing relationship
balance in relationship
know on personal level
- 178 **strategy on promotion**
- 179 **excited to do the complex work**
- 180 **good relationship with client**
- 181 **deliver good product**
value add
- 182 **prove yourself**

- 183 **set them up for failure**
- 184 **navigate career**
- 185 **unchartered waters**
-
- 186 **understanding what is required**
what we signed up for
must understand what goals they want to achieve
know what is required from you
knew firm's policy
- 187 **progression (includes progressing)**
system of progression
prospects in the firm
progression up the ranks
go through ranks
-
- 188 **sounding board**
- 189 **no judgement**
- 190 **vulnerable space**
- 191 **solutions driven**
-
- 192 **politics within the firm**
unspoken practices of the firm
-
- 193 **transferring knowledge**
- 194 **transferring skill**
- 195 **marketing and branding**
- 196 **introduced to clients from beginning**
- 197 **work on big deals**
- 198 **promotion not automatic**
- 199 **valued**
-
- 200 **clients needs**
take instructions from client
take instructions
business imperative to sponsor
clients must see the juniors faces
deal with clients needs
importance of clients needs
-
- 201 **positive approach**
-
- 202 **sponsee ready for promotion**
when sponsee was ready
when sponsee felt ready

- 203 **encouragement**
- 204 **willing to help**
accessible to sponsee
- 205 **willing to go the mile**
- 206 **cross the finish line**
- 207 **setting out on a journey together**
- 208 **having the same goal**
- 209 **not management driven relationship**
- 210 **did CA rotation**
- 211 **more mature**
- 212 **no expectations**
no expectations from sponsor
- 213 **expected good work**
progression of expectations
personal expectations
expectation of communication
expectation to communicate with client
expectation to work
expected to deliver a good product
- 214 **positive about future**
- 215 **management supportive of relationship**
- 216 **compassion**
- 217 **loyalty to firm**
- 218 **loyalty to me**
- 219 **fairness**
not treated unequally
- 220 **modest**
- 221 **good human being**
- 222 **participation**
- 223 **skills set**
- 224 **speak to client**
- 225 **develop relationships**
tactful
- 226 **father figure**
paternalistic

- 227 **maturity**
qualified sponsor
mature
- 228 **informal**
no formal strategy
informal but clear
informal relationship
- 229 **different from sponsor**
- 230 **personality**
easy to get on with
gentle manner
gets on well with everyone
- 231 **engage differently**
more engagement
- 232 **more relaxed**
- 233 **sponsee strategy for promotion**
more formal than mentorship
- 234 **Sponsor driven promotions**
Sponsor motivated promotion
sponsor actioned promotion
promotion driven by sponsor
- 235 **male dominated profession**
- 236 **flexibility**
- 237 **not going to change**
- 238 **understanding**
reasonable attitude
understand needs
- 239 **identify right people**
- 240 **tracking progress**
on track
career tracked
monitoring
frequent or periodic measurements
management watching progress
- 241 **all matters were complex**

- 242 **bright stars (includes stars, talent, talented)**
talent
smart
see something in person
certain quality
chosen
- 243 **representation of women and black lawyers**
- 244 **promotion**
accelerated promotion
willing to promote
- 245 **right exposure**
- 246 **work allocation / put on big deals**
accountability for work
allocation of work
- 247 **right clients**
existing client base
- 248 **expose to clients**
work referral
lots of exposure
- 249 **platform**
- 250 **correct track**
- 251 **type of work**
- 252 **expertise**
- 253 **exposure to different lawyers**
- 254 **feedback to sponsee**
- 255 **allocate mentor**
- 256 **supervision**
observed her work
- 257 **junior female**
new kid on the block
- 258 **strategy for development**
set strategy for promotion
evolving strategy
- 259 **prevent burn out**

- 260 **positive messaging**
- 261 **reward**

- 262 **work hard**
 - work harder

- 263 **anonymous selection**

- 264 **career path progression (includes career path or career advancement to partner)**
 - watching career progress
 - look after career
 - interested only in career path

- 265 **feedback to management**
- 266 **anonymity works**
- 267 **intervention to address gender disparity**
- 268 **transparency in process**
- 269 **focus on black lawyers and women**
- 270 **intervene when they become associates**
- 271 **strategy from the beginning**

- 272 **set criteria**
 - objective criteria
 - management criteria

- 273 **development plan**

- 274 **management driven programme**
 - personal circumstances irrelevant
 - firm driven sponsorship
 - firm managed programme
 - firm structured sponsorship reflects firm goals

- 275 **positive intervention from management**
- 276 **look after**
- 277 **anonymity selection to avoid tensions within team**

- 278 **exposure to different types of work**
 - exposure in the firm
 - exposure to right people in the firm
 - exposure to right type of work

- 279 **diversity**
 - mostly female of colour
 - treat women differently

- 280 **interested sponsors**
- 281 **strategy to address failure**
strategy to deal with it
- 282 **leadership potential**
create leader
leadership
leadership opportunities
leadership role
- 283 **firm's culture**
- 284 **knowledge banks**
- 285 **pro bono**
- 286 **business development**
- 287 **women's programme**
- 288 **events for women**
- 289 **invite female clients**
- 290 **bring in own clients**
- 291 **discuss promotions**
- 292 **structure**
structure of firm
- 293 **feel special**
- 294 **future leaders**
- 295 **management driven promotions**
promotions firm driven
promotion firm managed
firm managed promotions
managment decides promotion
- 296 **not mentors**
- 297 **not a personal relationship**
- 298 **agenda to advance women**
address diversity
- 299 **referral of matters (includes work)**
- 300 **attention given to sponsee**
- 301 **owe them**
- 302 **can't let them down/disappoint**
- 303 **stressful**

- 304 **grateful**
- 305 **panic**
- 306 **they made me**
- 307 **manipulative**
- 308 **bond**
- 309 **special**
- 310 **guinea pig**
- 311 **psychometric testing**
- 312 **investment**
- 313 **poured my soul**
- 314 **pilot programme**
-
- 315 **stretch them**
running on a treadmill
pushed to do more
pushed him in front of potential team
pushing someone
never stopped
new goal posts
constant peak
continuous skills transfer
high achievers
high demanding work
high expectation
high standard
-
- 316 **excellent**
- 317 **no plateau**
- 318 **exhausting**
- 319 **more work**
- 320 **market internally**
- 321 **market clients**
marketed together
-
- 322 **keep the momentum**
- 323 **do work that senior partners don't do**
- 324 **Sponsorship is more than mentorship**
- 325 **skills transfer part of mentorship**
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- 326 **sponsorship is taking a risk**
formal structure
foundation with mentorship
-
- 327 **sponsorship publicly putting them forward**
sponsee introduced to clients
sponsorship must be beginning and goals

sponsorship ended when I became salaried partner
speak at conferences
advocate for sponsee

- 328 **advance sponsee**
get a person from A to B
get them ahead
- 329 **risky than mentorship**
- 330 **adapt and innovate**
- 331 **respond to market needs**
- 332 **develop new practice areas**
- 333 **specialisation**
- 334 **look to the future**
- 335 **creative and individual thinkers**
- 336 **different view points**
- 337 **training environment**
excited to teach
- 338 **hierarchical system with senior and junior**
- 339 **sponsor driven relationship**
Sponsor driven sponsorship
Sponsor's expectations
sponsor driven
sponsor decided
sponsor assisted
driven by sponsor
improve knowledge and skills to help sponsee
- 340 **bait and switch method**
- 341 **marked by other attorneys**
- 342 **management get tired of you**
- 343 **leadership style**
- 344 **coaching**
- 345 **inspirational leader**
- 346 **dreamer**
- 347 **taking a chance on people**
- 348 **risk my reputation**
social capital to advance
refer on your reputation
bet your reputation
- 349 **old boys club**
- 350 **sponsee driven complex work**

- 351 **proximal development**
352 **juniors sit in meetings**
- 353 **communciate with client**
must communicate with client
- 354 **work with clients**
- 355 **build brand outside firm**
social media
brand
built a brand on the relationship
client development
client functions
- 356 **external training**
overseas training
training with outside practitioners
go to conferences
- 357 **nurturing**
358 **complex difficult work**
- 359 **resilient driven people**
sustain yourself
take criticism
- 360 **commitment**
361 **fix mistakes /problems**
362 **decision makers**
- 363 **create climate for promotion**
conducive environment
- 364 **advice given (includes advice)**
learned through advice
- 365 **women judged on what they have done to date**
366 **men judged on what they will do in the future**
367 **must change firm dynamics**
368 **rules set by men**
369 **person with potential to make more money**
must be released to do so
- 370 **change the rules**
should change but won't change

- 371 **men better to sponsor**
- 372 **networks within organisation**
- 373 **networks in market place**

- 374 **timeframes**
timelines

- 375 **needs of the team and organisation relevant**
- 376 **leverage teams**
- 377 **organic relationship**
- 378 **vision**
- 379 **confidence in himself**

- 380 **different approach**
sponsors have different approaches

- 381 **graduated to complex work**

- 382 **sponsor assist to build a network**
all clients are firm clients

- 383 **respects**
well respected
respects others

- 384 **sponsee not ready**
Sponsee no expectations
sponsee did not pursue promotion
underserving of promotions
not aware of expectations
no strategy on career
couldn't keep the pace
decided to drop down to salary
less experienced sponsee

- 385 **not afraid of failure**
- 386 **another model creates problems**
- 387 **good environment**
- 388 **networking**
- 389 **blank canvass**
- 390 **Looking out for you**

- 391 **position of power**
power
powerful

- 392 **does not support alternative model**
- 393 **charismatic**
make a difference
make connections
make small talk
- 394 **working together**
reciprocal
- 395 **never let me down**
loyalty
- 396 **not a threat to him**
not threatened by juniors
- 397 **comfortable with his position**
- 398 **no strategy**
- 399 **transition in firm**
- 400 **meet clients immediately**
take to consults
- 401 **favouritism**
- 402 **share life experiences**
- 403 **ethical dilemmas**
- 404 **teaching**
willing to teach
teacher
- 405 **firm managed process**
- 406 **self driven**
- 407 **measureable outcomes**
- 408 **must engage expectations of sponsee**
- 409 **persuasive**
- 410 **high regard**
- 411 **ethical integrity**
handle situations
- 412 **practical business solutions (includes pragmatic solutions)**
- 413 **empowerment**
serve everyone's purpose
- 414 **soft skills**

- 415 **skills transfer part of training not sponsorship**
no skills transfer - during articles
- 416 **sponsee driven relationship**
made myself indispensable to him
- 417 **environment**
418 **compliment each other**
- 419 **skills development essential**
420 **build a team**
421 **well rounded**
422 **create new model**
- 423 **authoritative sponsor (includes having authority)**
forceful or persistent
- 424 **quick turnaround times**
425 **direction**
426 **entrepreneurial**
- 427 **straightforward**
very direct
can take a punch
- 428 **all female team**
- 429 **external sponsor**
does not have to be within the team dynamic
sponsor people outside firm
- 430 **world has changed**
no more old boys club
females outnumber males
- 431 **in team skills transfer**