# LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES FACED BY FEMALE MANAGERS IN THE CITY OF JOHANNESBURG METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY

by

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## DEDICATION

These achievements are dedicated to my family members:

- My wife, Mashudu, and son, Thoriso.
- My father, John, my mother, Violet, my siblings, Raymond, Refilwe, Pontsho, Dipolelo and Tiisetso.
- The late Head of Department of Social Work at the University of Venda, Professor Dumisani Thabede. Your sudden passing when I was about to submit this project reminded me of the valuable contribution you made in producing a professional in me. May your soul rest in peace.

Thank you for your support and I will always love you.

MT Ralebona

# ABSTRACT
## LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES FACED BY FEMALE MANAGERS IN THE CITY OF JOHANNESBURG METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY

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Historically, women all over the world have been subjected to several kinds of discriminatory behaviour, attitudes and stereotypes. This results from long-held patriarchal values and male dominance. In the workplace, women suffer prejudice against their role in society, which often limits their chances of reaching top leadership positions. Women are faced with many challenges in the workplace, including, inter alia: the ′glass ceiling′, work/life demands, workplace inequality, sexual harassment, poor career development and tokenism.

The goal of this study is to explore the leadership challenges facing female managers in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality. Fifteen operational managers were purposively selected by means of the non-probability sampling method. The research approach to this study is the qualitative approach. For the purpose of this study, the collective case study design was used. Qualitative researchers are interested primarily in the meaning subjects give to their life experiences. The researcher made use of the collective case study design to gain insight into the experiences by the female managers in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality. Semi-structured one-on-one interviews were conducted as the primary data collection method.

The findings of this study reveal that female managers are experiencing leadership challenges, including reaching the `glass ceiling´, work/life demands, workplace inequality, workplace discrimination and lack of promotional prospects. The

findings call for a concerted effort by senior management to ensure equal opportunities for women in the workplace. The City of Johannesburg should take the lead in addressing these challenges in order to champion the course of women's emancipation.

**Key concepts**

Women in the workplace

Feminist theory

Leadership

Challenges

Management

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# CHAPTER 1
## INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH STUDY

### 1.1    INTRODUCTION

Historical evidence from social science and human experience reveals that negative stereotypes and perceptions of women have long characterized the process of socialization (Schwartz & Scott, 2010:63; Sudha, 2000:211). This has tended to entrench the long-held affirmation of patriarchal values and dominance. Against the contemporary conviction that women are equal to men, the spirit of male dominance still influences the institutions of caste and patriarchal family, religious mores and dominant value systems. Grey-Bowen and McFarlane (2010:66) argue that women still spend more time on household activities than men spend, so they have fewer opportunities for work and taking up responsibilities and leadership positions in organizations, where they would earn a larger salary than their male counterparts would.

Conway (2012:5) maintains that women's working conditions and prospects have undoubtedly improved compared with what they were years ago. A far higher proportion of women now have paid work and are spending more time in the workforce. Women now have access to maternity leave with pay, as well as various options relating to flexible working arrangements, enabling more women to progress in paid employment. However, discrimination and disadvantage still persist, as can be seen in the poor representation of women in leadership positions and in their unpaid caring responsibilities, which are more numerous than men's, not forgetting the  persistent gender pay gap.

Based on this, the study argues that the long-held affirmation of patriarchal values views women's role in society as being restricted to the home sphere. Consequently, this encourages societies to side-line women when it comes to major issues affecting their welfare. The study seeks to explore the leadership challenges facing female managers in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality. Daft and Marcic (2008:10) describe a manager as someone whose responsibility is to coordinate resources in an effective and efficient manner to accomplish the organisation's goals. In the light of this definition, the

researcher defines a manager as someone vested with the authority to direct the activities in the line of vision of the company executives and whose subordinates account to him/her.

The City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality heeded a call for transformation and undertook initiatives to take up the process of female emancipation in their ranks as a serious matter. The decision follows the adoption of the City of Johannesburg Employment Equity Policy (2008), which guides the City, with the implementation of affirmative action measures for equitable representation of designated groups (including women). Within certain attempts to deconstruct negative perceptions of women, Mr Enoch Mafuyeka (2011), a Deputy Director in the Municipality, claims that the City of Johannesburg has taken a new step in recognizing the role played by women in the effective management of the City, thereby ensuring that residents continue to receive first-class service delivery. Ms Faith Sibiya (2011), a social worker in the City of Johannesburg, argues that, while the City of Johannesburg is making efforts to ensure women's representation at the management level, this should not be a window dressing exercise but should be a real transformation in the empowerment of women.

The researcher fully recognizes that a male conducting this study may find that this affects his neutrality, along with his personal beliefs and biases. However, the researcher is a professional social worker who discharges his duties guided by the principles of respect for diversity and the promotion of social justice, acceptance, non-judgmental attitudes and respect for the individual.

## 1.2    LITERATURE REVIEW

Historically, women the world over often have been subjected to several kinds of discriminatory behaviour, attitudes and policies (The South African Board of People Practice Women's Report, 2011:13). In South Africa, efforts to deconstruct negative stereotypes and perceptions of women, and to establish a gender-neutral society, have made progress in a short space of time, whereas in other countries the pace has been much slower (Odak, 2009:01). After South Africa's first democratic election in 1994, for example, women formed 27.75% of members of the National Assembly, which increased to 30% and 32.75% in 1999

and 2004 respectively. After the 2009 National Elections, women's representation rose to 45%.

Despite these successes, women are still encountering challenges to acceptance in terms of managing their sections/units without being subjected to prejudice based on biological grounds. The Business Women´s Association of South Africa (2007:16) census indicates that, while women make up 52% of the adult population in South Africa, only 41% form part of the working population, of which only 16.4% is represented at the executive managerial level. Among the initiatives central to the national democratic revolution is the need to challenge patriarchal ideology and practices in wider society and its institutions, in the economy, the media, government and the family (Tlhoalele, 2006:3).

Women in the workplace are confronted with many challenges (Price Waterhouse Coopers, 2007; Pollard, 2007:02). The following have been identified as the main challenges confronting women managers:

- Exclusion from informal male-oriented networks;
- Lack of female role models;
- Lack of mentoring opportunities;
- Work/life challenges and perceived lack of flexibility;
- Gender stereotyping;
- Lack of transparency in role appointments;
- Lack of opportunities (known/communicated);
- Lack of clear career paths; and
- Perceived lack of skills/experience,

The International Labour Organisation (2004:53) points out that one of the challenges facing women is that of finding the balance between paid work and family life. Women still perform a large share of household tasks, in addition to childbearing. The South African Women Entrepreneurs' Report (Department of Trade and Industry, 2005:10) contends that women face the pressure of having to run a home, look after children and care for their husband and family. The report claims that, over and above these challenges to women in management positions, some women managers endure sexual harassment in the workplace in order to be

given preference over their peers and male counterparts when it comes to their job prospects and promotion opportunities. Schwartz and Scott (2010:305) confirm that women are subjected to more sexual harassment than men are.

Regarding the challenges facing women in leadership positions, Schwartz and Scott (2010:63) argue that women still suffer from prejudice and stereotypical beliefs about the role of women in society, which often limits their chances of reaching top leadership positions. Challenges to women in management positions include, inter alia, bullying, sexual harassment, the glass ceiling and having to prove to society that, with their learning and academic training, they are capable (Boland, 2005:264; Gregory, 2003:20; Hellrieger & Slocum, 2009:216). Nino (2006:4) argues that, even with the help of the planned and anti-discrimination laws in place, women still encounter the glass ceiling.

Despite women's empowerment, they still battle to present themselves as equal to the task when it comes to male-dominated leadership roles in the workplace. Pollard (2007:3) is of the opinion that, as more women graduate with business and other professional degrees, and enter corporate life, the problem becomes urgent because they continue to experience slower progress in comparison with their male counterparts.

The greatest reported threat to the advancement of women to positions of executive leadership in South Africa is the lack of quality high school and tertiary education. Despite the daunting challenges, South Africa presently recognizes that women have a crucial role to play in stimulating economic growth, value addition and wealth creation (Davidson & Burke, 2011:367). South Africa's transformation is therefore about society and business embracing and practising a culture of constitutional democracy with the 'new' social values of freedom, equality and respect for human dignity (Msomi, 2006:22).

Studies show that, traditionally, males rather than females have held the vast majority of top leadership positions in the USA, Europe and throughout the world (Weyer, 2005:441). Although increasing numbers of women enter the workforce and take up managerial positions, their access to leadership positions remains limited. This limitation is such that, even though some women hold the highest qualifications in their profession and reflect a

great deal of competency, they tend to occupy lower positions. Bias or prejudice in the workplace arises from the inconsistencies between workplace roles and the attributes ascribed to an individual (Burke & Mattis, 2005:85). Eshleman and Bulcroft (2010:446) emphasise that such inconsistencies can be traced back to the family structure as a primary agent of socialization and that it continues to maintain patriarchal values that lead to the subordination of women.

Msomi (2006:42) argues that enabling legislation and the progressive constitution have facilitated the progress of women in leadership positions in both government and corporate South Africa, but patriarchy continues to prevent women from achieving professional roles as decision-makers and authority figures in organizations. Werhane and Painter-Morland (2011:187) contend that, in addition to the broad social pressures that women face in many societies, gender stereotyping can also be detrimental to their progress in an organization. The constant publicity on how executive women differ from men serves to reaffirm stereotypical perceptions regarding women's leadership style and ability.

The problem identified for the research study is that females in management positions face more challenges than males do. These challenges are often organised and may have an influence on the general functioning of women in management positions. The researcher believes that a research project in this field may add value to the continued endeavour to bring about women's emancipation in the workplace. Research on the extent of such challenges from the perspective of South Africa as a developing country, which attained freedom and democracy only in 1994, could contribute to the existing knowledge base. The research question for this study is a central, briefly worded question general enough to permit exploration (Rossman & Marshal, 2006:39; Van der Velde, Jansen & Anderson, 2004:16): What are the leadership challenges facing female managers in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality?

## 1.3    THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Gender differences between men and women have always been a contested terrain. This has influenced how roles have functioned in society.  Rhoads (2004:3) argues that families

and culture create notions of masculinity and femininity and establish gender-specific roles. Thompson (2001:8) mentions that feminism is concerned with exposing the reality of male domination, while struggling for a world where women are recognised as human beings in their own right. Rhoads (2004:15) claims that most feminists therefore conclude that, because social forces construct masculinity and femininity, they can thus also be "deconstructed" en route to a more just society.

The theoretical framework for this research study will be the feminist perspective. Feminism emphasises that gender inequality exists and that the inequality results in discrimination in nearly in all aspects of life (Zastrow, 2012:247). The inequality between men and women involves attitudes and actions. Women often have trouble in a "sexist, classist and racist society" (Zastrow, 2012:248). Feminism theory is based on the philosophy that men and women should be equal politically, economically and socially (Tandon, 2008:23).The oppressed position of women often results from a patriarchal value system favouring men (Eshleman & Bulcroft, 2010:446; Miley, O'Melia & DuBois, 2009:34). The feminist approach is related to the social work values and principles of respect, equality and social justice.

Feminist theories attempt to answer the questions of 'Where are women?' and 'Why is this situation as it is?' (Schwartz & Scott, 2010:49). This correlates with the aim of the research study to explore the leadership challenges to female managers in their specific municipality. Feminist theory aims to both provide women with a voice and to correct the male-oriented perspective that men's experiences are the standard. The researcher will use this theoretical framework to listen to and understand the voices of the female managers relating to the leadership challenges they experience in a male-oriented society.

## 1.4    GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

### 1.4.1.  Goal of the study

The goal of this study is to explore the leadership challenges facing female managers in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality.

### 1.4.2. Objectives of the study

With the goal of the study in mind, the researcher will explore the leadership challenges of:

- Workplace inequality facing women in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality;
- Reaching a 'glass ceiling' in terms of promotional prospects for female managers in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality;
- Female managers in relation to work-life demands in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality; and
- Discrimination faced by female managers in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality.

The study will draw conclusions and make strategic recommendations for addressing the leadership challenges of female managers in the workplace and the management of the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality.

### 1.5 RESEARCH APPROACH

The research approach to be adopted for the purposes of this study is qualitative, as this will enable the researcher to draw conclusions based primarily on constructivist perspectives (i.e. the multiple meanings of individual experiences of challenges faced by female managers) (Creswell, 2003:18). This approach will be appropriate for the exploration of the challenges facing female managers in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality. It will provide in-depth understanding and will ensure that the views and experiences of the female managers included in the study represent a holistic picture of the challenges facing them in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality. Houser and Bokovoy (2006:200) argue that the goal of qualitative research is to depict an experience in such depth that even someone who has not experienced it would be able to understand it. This approach will generate the leadership challenges faced by female managers in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality. Since the approach allows for probing, it will present rich information and subsequently rich findings.

## 1.6    TYPE OF RESEARCH

The study will adopt an applied research stance aimed at helping practitioners accomplish tasks to solve problems in practice (Neuman, 2000:23 in Fouché & De Vos, 2005:105). Male managers still characterize and dominate the workplace and this perpetuates the long-held stereotypical view of women and their role in society. Research in this field will assist in understanding these challenges and will contribute to strategies for addressing them. The results of this research project may bring about recommendations to explore the possibility of levelling the ground for equality and fairness to prevail between male and female managers, particularly in the workplace.

## 1.7    RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This study aims at exploring the leadership challenges faced by female managers in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality. Fifteen female operational managers were selected by means of purposive and availability-sampling procedures that are sub-types of non-probability sampling. A collective case study research design was adopted for the purpose of this study (Grinnell & Unrau, 2011:233; Schutt, 2006:152; Woodside, 2010:1). The researcher made use of the face-to-face interview method of data collection (Jupp, 2006:157). Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the participants, for which the researcher was guided by an interview schedule to facilitate the interview and have a standardised process (Maykut & Morehouse, 2004:97). The researcher used an audio recorder for the interviews to accurately capture the proceedings and ensure control over, the quality of data (Crowther & Lancaster, 2005:82). Data analysis was done by comprehensively and accurately transcribing every interview. The researcher ensured that information recorded during the interview was correctly captured to reflect the exact feelings and meanings of the participants (De Vos, 2005:335). The research was also conducted according to the ethical principles of research.

## 1.8   DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

### 1.8.1   City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality

This concept refers to the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality as defined in the Municipal Systems Act (32 of 2000).

### 1.8.2   Leadership

Leadership is an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes and outcomes that reflect their shared purpose (Daft, 2007:4). Leadership encompasses readiness, willingness and the ability to leverage all facets of an authentic character in order to attract, retain and energize employees who will achieve sustainable success for the organisation (Redmond, 2009:8). The researcher understands leadership as a role(s) that an individual or a collective plays in influencing followers to identify, acknowledge and recognise a particular way of doing and directing, in order to attain certain observable organisational results.

### 1.8.3   Challenges

According to *Webster's New Explorer Dictionary* (2005:81), challenges refer to stimulation by presenting difficulties. *Chambers-Macmillan South African Student's Dictionary* (1995:157) defines challenge as an exciting or exacting test of one's ability. In view of these definitions, the researcher understands challenges as those factors hindering female managers from performing the duties required by their management role.

### 1.8.4   Management

Management is a process of designing and maintaining an environment in which individuals working together in groups efficiently accomplish selected aims (Reddy, 2004:3). Nelson and Economy (2010:9) define management as making something planned happen within a specific area using available resources. Management is thus a process of channelling the

available resources to achieve the organisational vision by setting simple, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-bound objectives.

## 1.9   CONTENTS OF THE RESEARCH REPORT

This research project report will consist of the following chapters:

- **Chapter 1: General background**

This chapter presents an introduction to the study, and includes the problem statement, goal and objectives of the study and research question. The chapter also introduces the problem under investigation, its magnitude and the rationale behind the study.

- **Chapter 2: Leadership challenges faced by females in the workplace**

This chapter discusses the theoretical background to the research problem. The researcher presents the major research findings by other scholars and authors relating to the leadership challenges facing female managers. This is integrated with statistical information on women's progress in South Africa and beyond.

- **Chapter 3: Research methodology and research findings**

This chapter discusses the methodological procedures employed in this study. Such procedures include sampling, sampling methods, data collection methods and the presentation of the research findings.

- **Chapter 4: Conclusions and recommendations**

This chapter presents the conclusions derived from the research and recommendations for future research in the field.

## 1.10   LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

In executing the study, the researcher identified some limitations, which are discussed below.

### 1.10.1 Reluctancy

Owing to the sensitivity of the topic, many of the participants were reluctant to be audio recorded during the interview for fear of victimisation by the authorities should they be identified as having said something to criticise senior management. The researcher verbally

explained the confidentiality of the research responses and confirmed this by means of a letter of informed consent in which confidentiality was guaranteed.

**1.10.2  Restructuring**

The study was conducted during a period in which the City was undergoing a restructuring process. This caused a slight delay in the scheduling of interviews with the participants as they envisaged that the restructuring process could affect them.

**1.10.3 Generalising research results**

Because the sample for the study was relatively small and the research was qualitative, the research results cannot be generalised. The research study does provide a foundation for future research.

# CHAPTER 2
# WOMEN IN THE WORKPLACE

## 2.1    INTRODUCTION

Inequality in the workplace is a well-researched phenomenon. Women often experience the 'glass ceiling', which limits their career progress. Career breaks, differences in management or leadership styles between women and men, a lack of confidence or self-belief among women, the burden of childcare and domestic responsibilities, and prejudice on the part of male managers feature among the more popular views (Jackson, 2000:72). Until recently, history has not treated women well. The more we learn of the past, the greater our awareness that women have played an unequal role in the economy. Phillips and Phillips (2000:9) emphasize a causal connection between such factors as women's role in reproduction, their assignment to do unpaid work in the home, the social institutions and attitudes of a patriarchal society, the imperatives of industrial capitalism, and the inhumanity of unregulated markets, and the pervasive and persistent inferior economic status of women

While women have begun to break through the glass ceiling, they have yet to move into the topmost executive ranks in large numbers. Managements have an obligation to create appropriate career paths, ensure that women have equal opportunities for attaining top positions, actively retain such women, and provide appropriate counselling and coaching. Managements must also be willing to appoint a talented woman who has not necessarily held the prerequisite jobs but has the credentials for the position. Gordon and Whelan (1998:18) point out that men have often used their informal networks to lobby for and secure positions, while women have been excluded from these networks and the less publicized opportunities they sometimes yield.

Despite the continuing obstacles, employed women have made some progress over the past few decades, and a number of laws have been passed to help them in the workplace (Freedman, 2010:8). Mathipa and Tsoka (2001:325) argue that, ideally, situations where women are treated equally with men are truly uplifting, positive, morally satisfying and spiritually enhancing, cleansing and liberating. Not only is it desirable, but it is also very

welcome, the more so because, in South Africa, women constitute the larger section of society.

This chapter provides an overview of the challenges faced by female managers in the workplace, with specific focus on the glass ceiling, work/life balance, poor career development, earning gaps, sex discrimination, sexual harassment, workplace inequalities and domestic and childcare responsibilities. The chapter also focuses on the history of women in the workplace to provide an overview of the challenges female managers face in the workplace.

## 2.2   FEMINISM AND WOMEN IN THE WORKPLACE

### 2.2.1  The nature of feminism

Tandon (2008:27) defines feminism as both a proposal for social transformation and a movement that strives to end the oppression of women. Tendon (2008: 2) concedes that defining feminism can be challenging. A broad understanding of feminism includes women (and men) acting, speaking and writing on women's issues and rights, identifying social injustice in the status quo and bringing their own unique perspective to bear on issues. Thompson (2001:8) claims that feminism seeks to expose the reality of male domination while struggling for a world where women are recognized as human beings in their own right.

Kirby, Kidd, Koubel, Barter, Hope, Kirton, Madry, Manning and Triggs (2000:165) identify three types of feminism:
- **Liberal feminism:** This type argues that thoughts, stereotypes and gender socialization are seen to be the reason for the inequality of power between men and women. Giddens (2006:469) argues that liberal feminism tends to channel their energies into establishing and protecting equal opportunities for women through legislation and other democratic means. Zohra (2002:109) argues that the main emphasis is on removing the barriers that prevent women from competing on an equal footing with men in paid employment.

- **Radical feminism:** This regards female oppression and subordination as the results of a male-dominated social system. Such a patriarchal society is built on men`s desire to control women ideologically and through violence and force. Kendall (2012:339) claims that male domination causes all forms of human oppression, including racism and classism. If women's conditions are to improve, patriarchy must be abolished.

- **Marxist/Socialist feminism:** This has attempted to combine accounts of gender discrimination in society with those of class. Giddens (2006:470) argues that socialist feminism seeks to defeat both patriarchy and capitalism. It further claims that capitalism and material and economic factors underlie women's subservience to men because patriarchy has its roots in private property. Capitalism intensifies patriarchy – men's domination over women.

Schreider (2008:125) claims that feminists have succeeded in advancing gender salience in the policy-making process and in changing the social values associated with women's roles in the family and workplace. Feminism also highlights the fact that conservative politics, political representation, and policy advocacy cannot be fully understood without some focus on the role of the gender and feminist movement.

## 2.2.2  Evolution of feminism

Alexander, LaRosa, Bader, Garfield and Alexander (2010:7) maintain that feminism has evolved to help generations of women, and it will continue to evolve as women face new challenges and opportunities. The evolution of feminism has progressed in the following waves:

- **The first wave:** This wave began in the nineteenth and early Twentieth centuries. Its aim was to secure basic rights for women, such as the right to vote and to own or and inherit property.

- **The second wave:** This wave occurred during the 1960s and 1970s and fought against specific injustices, like the lack of reproductive freedom, the denial of equal pay for equal work, and women not having equal access to jobs and education. The

second wave of feminism attempted to highlight ways in which society legally subjugated women, and thus turned their personal struggle into political action.

- **The third wave:** This wave began in the late 1980s and early 1990s and addressed domestic violence, access to safe and legal abortion, and sexual harassment, as well as equal status for women in education, work, athletics and social environments.

Pocock (2003:7) argues that feminism cannot be limited to the narrow claim of equal pay for work but should include the redistribution of work and care at home, and changes in the paid workplace. However, a key goal for feminists has been women's entry to public life through paid work, and a great deal of progress has been made towards that goal. Sather (2005:175) argues that, in as much as feminism has attained a measure of equality for women, there is still much more to be done.

## 2.3   THE HISTORY OF WOMEN IN THE WORKPLACE

### 2.3.1   Women and work in pre-industrial times

In the early days of America and Canada, men and women generally worked together in family businesses. Montgomery and Collette (2002:289) and Freedman (2010:10) discuss farming as the predominant enterprise, both in the colonies and later during the 1800s. This meant that physical strength and hardiness characterized working men and women. Women's participation in the workforce was widely assumed a necessary condition for their acceptance and empowerment in society. Women were responsible for caring for the home and the children, and men were involved in jobs requiring physical strength. Burnette (2008:51) argues that agriculture constituted major employment for women in pre-industrial times, although both genders jointly cleared land, planted crops, and tended livestock. Away from the farm, men were active in competitive jobs that earned significant money, such as shipbuilding, brewing, printing and merchant shipping, and thereby gaining economic advantage over women. Women were primarily involved in a limited number of trades. They performed basic tasks and made items like candles and soap. Businesses like these were thought acceptable for women because they represented the sphere of "women's work". However, men were given opportunities to run major businesses. Because they made most

of the money, men retained most of the power and ultimately had the upper hand over women.

### 2.3.2 The industrial age

Prior to the mid-nineteenth century, most of the work women performed was inside the home. A continuation of women's work was performed in someone else's home or done outside the home. Work done in the home consisted of doing laundry or sewing and providing childcare. Through the first quarter of the twentieth century, it was common for both middle- and upper-class households to employ servants. Many women served as house cleaners, cooks and other household employees, often entering employment as young girls (Duiker & Spielvogel, 2007:552; Freedman, 2010:10). As the increasing number of women began to fight for the rights of women, the need for education was identified. There was a demand for teachers, most of whom were women. Men viewed teaching children as an extension of women's "natural role" as nurturers of children. Some women became tenant farmers, managing their own farms. Burnette (2008:51) points out that most of these women farmers were probably widows who became farmers when their husbands died.

In the context of South Africa, Mining Minerals Sustainable Development Southern Africa (2001:8) mentions that historical gender roles continued through the industrial age. Men were engaged in the mining sector, while women remained in the domestic sphere. Men became sole breadwinners, while women were responsible for maintaining the family. Moving from such traditional and relatively static gender roles into a space where women and men could be seen as people of equal worth and dignity, equal workers and earners, is an enormous step that requires a significant shift in gender roles, relations and responsibilities for both women and men.

### 2.3.3 The industrial revolution

Industrialization brought about a redefinition of gender roles in accordance with reshaped ideologies of masculinity and femininity, and a separation between the home and the workplace. Limited work opportunities for women led to pressure to pursue higher education

and professional careers. This, in turn, brought improvements in living standards and wages and a chance to escape patriarchal and parental control (Kramarae & Spender, 2000:1134; Spielvogel: 2012:711). In the 21st century, women have made remarkable progress, which would have been unimaginable even half a century ago. The increased participation of women in higher education and the labour market is often presented as evidence of considerable changes in women's roles in society (Fernandes & Cabral-Cardoso, 2006:99). Evertson and Nermo (2004:1285) argue that women have increased their participation in paid employment considerably, but men have not increased their participation in housework to the same extent.

Berger (1992:47) maintains that, from the mid-1920s, industrial development shifted women's position in the labour force. This posed new challenges and affected the working lives of both black and white women. Although women in the larger cities of South Africa received better earnings, their opportunities remained limited, as they were subjected to racial and gender stereotyping as well as discriminatory state policies (i.e. Apartheid) over which they had no control. For rural women, familial role expectations also influenced whether a woman remained in a rural community or sought to expand her choices by moving to a city.

The migrant labour system permanently altered women's status and power as well as the familiar structures and systems throughout the region. Britton (2005:10) claims this system, which started with colonialism and accelerated during apartheid, removed young, productive males from rural society, leaving disproportionately large numbers of women and children in rural areas. Women found themselves in a less secure position than men, especially when it came to control of or access to economic opportunities, jobs and land. In fact, this physical isolation had wide and long-lasting effects on black South African women, affecting not only their family systems and employment opportunities but also their access to basic education and health resources.

## 2.4    CONSTRAINTS AND BARRIERS TO WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP

The United Nations Report of Online Discussion on Women in Leadership Roles (United Nations Human Rights Council, 2007:19) identified the crosscutting constraints and barriers to women's leadership as follows:

- **Education:** Women still constitute the great majority of the world's illiterate population. In several developing countries, gender gaps in education and literacy persist. Without equitable access to quality education, women do not have the means of building their knowledge, capacities and skills to access well-paid, formal sector jobs and attain leadership positions. Unless the gender gaps in literacy and education are addressed, the next generation of women will be similarly marginalized from leadership roles. Iyer (2000:529) contends that many countries try to some extent to meet the demands for adult and continuing education through non-formal education, night schools and distance education.

- **Poverty:** Women constitute two thirds of the world's poor. Chen, Vanek, Lund, Heintz, Jhabvala and Bonner (2005:9) contend that gender inequality in employment has multiple dimensions. First, women are concentrated in dangerous forms of employment where they earn very little e.g. working in the remote farms in rural areas. In developed countries, women comprise the majority of part-time and temporary workers. Further, they are concentrated in work associated with low and unstable earnings and with a high risk of poverty. Secondly, within employment categories, women's hourly and monthly earnings are generally lower than men's are. A gender gap in earnings exists across almost all employment categories.

- **Gender role stereotypes and socio-cultural constraints:** Gender stereotypes and traditional conservative beliefs that a woman's place is at home raising a family, and that women are followers, not leaders, prevent women from participating in public life. London (2011:370) claims that women learn gender-role stereotypes over the course of their lifetime. These stereotypes have an impact on women's lifelong learning activities. They influence how girls and women view themselves and their potential, the subjects they study at school, their eventual career choices and their career advancement efforts.

- **Dual work-family roles:** In the absence of institutional arrangements and facilities to support the combination of work-family responsibilities, women often select certain types of sectors of work and lower levels of responsibility because it allows them to balance their work and family lives. Ahuja and Rodhain (2000:814) argue that many women's early career experiences coincide with the stage in life when they are getting married and starting a family. At this stage in their lives, professional women are faced with trying to manage a career, a home and childcare.

- **Tokenism and lack of commitment to gender equality:** The issue of tokenism suggests that women are appointed to leadership positions to fulfil affirmative action requirements but the appointment is not based on merit. Tokenism is a critical and disturbing concern, not only from the institutional perspective but also from the personal (Neely & Lee-Smeltzer, 2002:116).

- **Lack of leadership training and mentoring:** A number of participants in the online discussion (UNHCR, 2007:19) highlighted the lack of specific management training, skills training, professional development, decision-making skills and mentoring programmes, which prevent women from being effective leaders. Some of the barriers identified that prevent women from making effective decisions include resistance or acceptance by counterparts, the stigma associated with women as emotional beings who are not logical thinkers, protecting themselves from exposure to decision-making situations. However, Pue (2005:110) argues that women are progressively assuming leadership roles in every sector of society in unprecedented numbers. Yet, there is a significant lack of resources and programs available to address and meet their developmental needs.

- **Sexual harassment:** In the workplace, discrimination and sexual harassment were raised as challenges. Sexual harassment was considered a major barrier to women assuming leadership positions. Women who do not agree to sexual advances from male managers are typically not promoted, or else they leave the workforce. Boland (2005:4) claims that sexual harassment is more about exercising power than it is about sex. To assert power and induce fear in the victims is the real foundation of sexual harassment.

## 2.5    CHALLENGES FACED BY FEMALE MANAGERS IN THE WORKPLACE

A number of challenges face female managers in the workplace. Some, amongst many, include:

### 2.5.1  The "glass ceiling"

The glass ceiling constitutes an invisible organizational or perceptual barrier for women and minority groups, preventing them from moving up the corporate ladder. The glass ceiling is a barrier so subtle that it is transparent, yet so strong that it prevents women and minorities from moving up in the management hierarchy (Davidson & Burke, 2000:16). Thomas and Hersen (2002:24) argue that the glass ceiling may function not only as an advancement barrier, but also as a catalyst for career suicide, whereby, no matter what the individual does, corporate decision-makers will view it as less than desirable and counterproductive for the company.

Oakley (2002:391) as quoted by Weyer (2005:442) argues that these three categories explain the barriers that result in the glass ceiling:
- Corporate practices, such as recruitment, retention and promotion;
- Behavioural and cultural causes, such as stereotyping and preferred leadership style; and
- Structural and cultural explanations rooted in feminist theory.

Obstacles to women's advancement are not intentional. Theories and models accounting for the emergence of gender-related behaviours in organizations, and thus the creation of a glass ceiling, fall into three categories:

### 2.5.1.1    Biological explanations

The biological differences between men and women are based on the genetic patterns resulting from adaptations to differing reproductive challenges (Weyer, 2005:442). This

theory therefore suggests that our physical appearance is a result of inherent characteristics embedded in our biological make-up.

### 2.5.1.2   Socialization explanations

Biological differences have no universal meaning across cultures, but are based on societal expectations that produce and maintain inequality between genders (Weyer, 2005:442). Socialization theories argue that gender identity and differences are carried over from one generation to the next through various developmental processes associated with life stages, such as schooling and work life. Maccoby (2007:13) defines socialization as a process whereby individuals are taught the skills, behaviour patterns, values, and motivations needed for functioning in the culture in which they are brought up. It includes training for specific roles in specific occupations.

### 2.5.1.3   Structural/cultural explanations

Weyer (2005:442) maintains that the structural/cultural explanations are set out in two theories, the social role theory and the expectations state theory. Both theories argue that men and women are allocated different roles in society according to their gender. In particular, the family and occupational setting contribute to the allocation of roles defined exclusively based on gender. Men and women are assumed to possess qualities that ideally influence and shape them for these different roles. Specific expectations of individuals occupying a particular position or membership of a specific social category are entertained.

### 2.5.2   Work/life balance

Work/life means the harmonious and holistic integration of work and non-work in people's lives, allowing individuals to fulfil all their roles. People seek balance for many reasons – quality of life, childcare, elderly care, voluntary work, education, travel, sports, hobbies and time with friends. Men and women in relationships have to negotiate not only their respective organizations, but also with each other (Kakabades, Bank & Vinnicombe, 2004:50). Yukongdi and Benson (2006:48) claim that the greatest challenge faced by women managers is that of

managing their dual role of organizational managers and homemakers. Women experience tremendous stress caused by either work overload or underload. Women's overload or under load comes from the pressure to work harder to prove themselves.

One reason why many people continue to lead unbalanced lives is that there is nothing they can do to change their circumstances. They may feel trapped by the demands of their job, their employer's attitude or the financial demands for them to support themselves and their family (O'Loghlin, 2010:4). Another reason why people may be reluctant to address their work/life balance is that they fear that, if they raise these issues with their employer, they will be perceived as not being serious about their career (O'Loghlin, 2010:25). Gordon and Whelan (1998:12) emphasize that successful balancing does not mean merely getting all the family and career tasks done; it means developing and maintaining a healthy perspective on the quality and interdependency of the various aspects of their lives, as well as recognizing the value of the balancing act for their families.

Some companies in other countries help employees balance their work and family responsibilities and help them increase their health and enjoyment of life in various ways (Repa, 2010:149):

- Allowing employees to work part-time or share a job;
- Allowing employees to put in some of their work hours at home;
- Allowing flexible on-site work hours;
- Providing specific child-care benefits, including emergency care programs, on-site centres, and employer-arranged discounts with local care providers;
- Providing additional assistance to employees, such as counselling and seminars on work and family issues.

Work-life balance brings greater effectiveness to all aspects of life. Employees work better when they make time for family and personal interests (Buddhapriya, 2009:2). This necessitates businesses taking the issue seriously, because work-life balance would ensure business benefits, such as:

- A more motivated, satisfied and equitable workforce;
- Increased productivity;

- Improved recruitment and retention;
- Lower rates of absenteeism
- Reduced overheads;
- Improved customer experience.

### 2.5.3 Poor career development

Women are rapidly becoming better educated than men are (Gregory, 2003:12). They already earn more than half of all men holding undergraduate and Masters' degrees; they lag behind only when it comes to conferred doctorates. Women will thus be better qualified than men for positions of authority. The new challenge in the management arena is to foster the advancement of capable women into the ranks of executive leadership. Success requires addressing the issues of societal norms regarding women's status. A lessening in the notions of male superiority would be helpful to women's position. Burke and Mattis (2005:26) point out that the continued stereotypes emphasizing traditionally female characteristics would boost the women's perception and abilities to fill these positions. Increasing the number of successful high-profile women executives would downplay the prevailing masculine stereotypes.

Mentors play a crucial role in career development and may be even more crucial in the success of women than men may (Bilimoria & Piderit, 2007:120). More women who advance to corporate management have mentors, and those who fail to reach these levels cite the absence of mentors as reasons for their failure. Women may find it difficult to acquire mentors because they are different from men in more senior positions. They occupy a token status, and may pose potential discomfort in cross-gender relationships. Prpić, Oliviera and Hemlin (2009:55) suggest that the absence of effective mentoring could even be detrimental to women's careers, as it influences their job satisfaction, career advancement and productivity. Bilimoria and Piderit (2007:120) and Schabracq, Winnubst and Cooper (2003:361) further argue that these barriers to relationships involving women include lack of contact with potential mentors; the high visibility of women protégées because of their limited numbers (tokenism); negative stereotypes, making women unattractive as protégées;

behavioural differences between men and women; women's use of non-male influence strategies and cultural and organizational biases relating to cross-gender relationships.

Traditional career development frameworks, with their concentration on organizational prerogatives and a reluctance to take into account individual needs and family circumstances, have favoured male career progress and done little to help and encourage women, especially those with family responsibilities. Women have thus come to be viewed as having no interest in their career development. To resolve these difficulties, Jackson (2000:73) suggests that organizations should:

- Ensure that equal access to opportunities for training, development and promotion is available to all, and that women are not disadvantaged, regardless of their working arrangements;
- Make special arrangements when women are underrepresented in senior positions, to encourage them to take responsibility for their own career development by engaging in self-development, career planning and networking

Domenico and Jones (2006:5) maintain those women's career aspirations have progressed steadily, resulting in their increased participation in the workforce. The types of careers women choose and the factors affecting their choices are relevant issues to examine, as women continue to work in lower-paid, traditionally female-oriented jobs.

## 2.5.4  Earnings gaps

Given the massive growth in women's education and their movement into sectors of the economy typically reserved for men, one might expect a narrowing of the gender inequality in employment and wages to highlight the tensions between women's inclusion and their equality in the labour market (Pettit & Hook, 2009:123). Giele and Stebbins (2003:23) argue that, even as women's employment has become much more similar to men's, one persistent feature of women's work remains that of lower pay.

Women's earnings are less than men's for several reasons. Women face institutional barriers and societal attitudes to their capabilities that impede their entry into higher hierarchical

levels and managerial positions. Women managers are more likely to be appointed to positions that require less education and they are therefore often paid less. Women are still routinely offered lower starting salaries and are paid less than men doing the same work in the same position (Freedman, 2010:7; Rowley & Yukongdi, 2009:7). The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (2012:20) states that, because of the discrepancy in earnings, women accumulate less income than men do over their lifetime. Women's lower earnings increase their vulnerability to poverty, not only during their working lives but also in old age, and increase their economic dependence on a male breadwinner or state welfare.

Some of these managerial positions are in areas that offer limited career prospects i.e. rural areas. Men are also more likely to hold jobs that require more skills or offer higher pay in the same job categories, even when women are equally qualified. Men tend to receive higher overall pay packages at the time of recruitment. These packages can include bonuses, fringe benefits, company cars, mobile phones and travel allowances that are not necessarily offered to women (Rowley & Yukongdi, 2009:7). Rowley and Yukongdi (2009:7) and Sussman, Steinmetz and Peterson (1999:593) maintain that many managerial positions require extensive travel, relocation or long working hours. The demands from work can be difficult for women to cope with because of their family commitments. Hence, women often choose to pursue less demanding jobs that give them greater flexibility but are likely to offer them less career advancement and lower salaries.

### 2.5.5  Gender discrimination

Gender discrimination occurs when a person (or people) is treated unfairly in the work context because of gender (Crosby, Stockdale & Ropp, 2007:3). Because acts of sex discrimination are frequently subtly conceived and not readily detectable, women often remain unaware that sex discrimination constitutes a moving force in their work lives and, as a result, they seldom seek legal redress for it. Some may lack the financial resources to retain an attorney and others believe family responsibilities would make it impossible for them to become involved in extended litigation. Gregory (2003:11) argues that some women fear losing their jobs, while others believe that all workplaces are infested with sex discrimination, so do not bother to contest it. The number of women who suffer acts of sex

discrimination greatly exceeds the number who file discrimination claims against their employers. Women's failure to act unwittingly serves to perpetuate discriminatory conduct, policies and practices.

In South Africa, The Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act (PEPUDA) of 2000 was enacted to comply with section 9 of the constitution, which places a duty on the state to pass national legislation to prevent unfair discrimination and to promote the achievement of equality. Dupper, Garber, Landman, Christianson, Basson and Strydom (2004:22) argue that PEPUDA binds the State and all persons. Unlike the Constitution, Labour Relations Act, Employment Equity Act, PEPUDA contains a simple prohibition of discrimination. It is clear that both direct and indirect discrimination is prohibited.

### 2.5.6  Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is a type of sexual discrimination in the workplace. It includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, and sexual conduct directed towards a person because of gender. Sexual harassment is more about exercising power than about sex (Boland, 2005:4). Mueller, De Coster and Estes (2001:418) argue that existing research on sexual harassment and work outcomes has demonstrated that sexually harassed individuals are likely to experience diminished job satisfaction, loss of motivation for work, job stress, and loss of commitment to work, among several other negative outcomes.

In addition to unequal treatment on the job, women are vulnerable to sexual harassment, ranging from unwelcome advances to suggestive jokes and belittling remarks from men who resent or are threatened by their presence (Freedman, 2010:7). Women who have been harassed are exposed to psychological, physical and career-related consequences. Reid and Zalk (2002: 40) state that they present with health and psychological effects: depression, anxiety, sleep disturbances, gastrointestinal disorders, headaches, self-doubt, low self-esteem and feelings of vulnerability and helplessness.

Sexual harassment in the workplace is a reflection of an unequal relationship between a male manager and a subordinate female employee. Gregory (2003:21) argues that this

creates employment that is a hostile or offensive work environment for the woman. Sexual harassment of women by male co-workers expresses the ancient rule that women should be sexually available to men. It is a reminder, especially to the professional woman, that while she is apparently the supposed equal to her male colleagues, she is not really an equal. It further suggests that gaining economic independence does not elevate her beyond the old affirmation, in which she is intimately subordinate to men, so ultimately and naturally must be defined by her body as a male possession.

Women are now protected legally (Van der Westhuizen, Wessels, Swanepoel, Erasmus, Van Wyk & Schenk, 2011:454). Sections 10 and 14 of the Constitution (Act 108 of 1996) stipulate that sexual harassment is viewed as an infringement of a person's right to privacy and dignity. Sexual harassment is also strictly forbidden in terms of Section 6(3) of the Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998. The Code of Good Practice on the Handling of Sexual Harassment provides specifically for the elimination of sexual harassment in the workplace.

### 2.5.7  Workplace inequality

The ideal of gender equality implies equal opportunities for women in both leadership and management and in productive as well as care-giving work. Equality in productive work implies equal education, job opportunities and pay (Giele & Stebbins, 2003:8). Pettit and Hook (2009:167) argue that inequality between women and men in the workplace is a result of the social misconceptions about gender and family obligations. It is reinforced through social politics and employment conditions that regulate the expectations of the nature of jobs both genders could do at home and in the workplace.

Albiston (2010:45) claims that the gendered work practices and a gendered division of labour within the family are by-products of the move from home to industrialized settings. This gave rise to the interpretation that, after industrialization, men performed work – meaning wage labour – and women performed "residual" non-work life activities, such as caring for children at home. Accordingly, because work no longer took place in the household, women no longer worked in addition to their residual household tasks.

### 2.5.8  Workplace bullying

The Washington State Department of Labor and Industries (2011:1) and Randle (2006:8) claim that workplace bullying refers to repeated, unreasonable actions of individuals (or a group) directed at an employee (or a group of employees), which are intended to intimidate, degrade, humiliate or undermine; or which create a risk to the health or safety of the employee(s). It is the persistent criticism and personal abuse in public or private, which humiliates and demeans the person.

Consequently, women are even less able than men are to defend themselves against bullying. Moreover, for various reasons, women hold less powerful positions in organizations. Other women more often bully women, and other men more often bully men. Whereas men sometimes bully women exclusively, it is very seldom that women exclusively bully men. Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf and Cooper (2003:112) claim that South Africa has always played a leading role in the world in labour legislation. A founder member of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), South Africa was the first country in the world to codify labour legislation. Section 10 of the South African constitution states: "Everyone has inherent dignity and a right to have their dignity respected and protected". When dealing with workplace bullying, the Constitution is considered with the Employment Equity Act (section 5-11), and the Basic conditions of Employment Act (section 78-81) and the Labour Relations Act (schedule 7(2).

Parsons (2005:45) claims that multiple studies in an assortment of workplaces have yielded rich and provocative data. Men and women are found to bully equally. The myth in the business world has been that women would bring a kinder, tender, and more collaborative approach to the challenges of leadership, if only they were given the opportunity. The reality seems to be that the more women gain, the more they lose. While men and women bully equally, women bullies mostly target other women, and women are overwhelmingly chosen as targets regardless of who does the bullying. Seemingly, women who gain power are as liable to be abusive as men are, but gender discrimination forces them to bully women.

### 2.5.9  Work and child-care responsibilities

Kendall (2012:492) says that fifty percent of all marriages in the United States are dual-earner marriages, marriages in which both spouses are in the labour force. More than half of employed women hold down a full-time job. Even when their children are very young, most working mothers work fulltime. Many married women leave their paid employment at the end of the day and go home to perform hours of housework and childcare. This is referred to as the "second shift"- the domestic work that employed women perform at home after they have completed their working day on the job. As a result, many married women today contribute to the economic-wellbeing of their families and also meet many of the domestic needs of family members by cooking, cleaning, shopping, taking care of the children, and managing household routines.

Recognising that women with children confront unique problems in the workplace, some employers have initiated special career paths, commonly called "mommy tracks" designed specifically to accommodate working mothers. Flexi-time, extended maternity leave, and job sharing are some of the workplace variations that typical 'mommy tracks' plans offer (Gregory, 2003:106). Howe (2012:343) argues that issues of maternity and of paternity and high-quality childcare are vitally significant to balance. Over half of women return to work before their children are a year old. It is not necessary for a woman to stop working when she has children. She just needs support in place to ease the work-family strain, especially in the child's first year.

### 2.5.10 Tokenism

Although the number of women in the workforce is increasing, and their numbers in low and even middle-level management positions is also rising, some fields *(*especially high-paying fields) and higher-level organizational positions remain occupied primarily by men (Karsten, 2006: 200). This segregation means that women working throughout male dominated-fields and in top-level management often find that they are tokens in their workgroups, so although the overall workforce is changing, many workplaces remain segregated.

Tokenism means doing something in an insincere fashion in order to be seen complying with the law or satisfying a particular group of people (Palanithurai & Ragupathy, 2008:113). Employers should ensure that affirmative action appointments are not mere tokenism and window dressing, and should make every effort to integrate these new recruits into the mainstream of the workforce. On the other hand, as MacLeod (2002:139) indicates, these appointees should be aware of the possible difficulties and challenges facing them as they start their new career in a new, culturally diverse workplace.

Specifically, the barrier of tokenism may have a detrimental effect, depending on the following conditions (Scarborough & Collins, 2002: 62):

- When the organization's promotional mechanisms are equal and discriminatory;
- When the organization's promotional mechanism are equal and non-discriminatory, allowing for the advancement of women, but effects of tokenism are enough to deter individuals from competing advancement, and
- When competition for advancement is perceived as equal, but the combination of tokenism and formal policies tends to direct women towards a specific unit.

Mabokela (2007:117) argues that tokenism has negative and stressful consequences not only for those individuals selected as tokens but also for those who take tokens as positive role models and mentors in an organization.

## 2.6    CONCLUSION

This chapter presented the challenges that women face in the workplace. The chapter also illustrated the history of women in the workplace as well as describing how the long-held affirmation of gender biases, stereotypes and expectations contribute to the inequality persisting in the workplace. Such beliefs can negatively affect an individual's self-esteem and performance, and undermine the efforts to progress and advance in the workplace. These challenges also perpetuate the perception that women are not capable of leading, and further portray them as constantly unequal to their male counterparts in the workplace.

In the South African context, the progression of women into high positions in the workplace has received more attention since the dawn of democracy in 1994. The Constitution has enshrined the inherent rights to dignity and respect, which gave rise to the principles of equality and non-discriminatory practices based on gender, race and ethnicity. The constitution also made it possible for the adoption of labour laws that are accommodating and friendly to women in the workplace, i.e. the Employment Equity Act, the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, and the Labour Relations Act. Addressing the challenges that women still face in the workplace is a battle that needs an integrated and comprehensive approach if managements are to make workplaces friendly to female managers.

# CHAPTER 3
# EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

## 3.1    INTRODUCTION

The question this study aims to answer is: What are the leadership challenges faced by female managers in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality?

The goal of the study is to explore the leadership challenges faced by female managers in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality.

This chapter provides an overview of the research methodology used for drawing the empirical findings and conclusions. The researcher also provides an overview of the ethical aspects involved and applied in carrying out the empirical study, as discussed in Chapter 1.

## 3.2    RESEARCH APPROACH

The qualitative research approach was adopted for this study. This was appropriate for exploring the challenges facing female managers in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality. It provided in-depth understanding and ensured that the views and experiences of the female managers included in the study represented a personal, holistic picture of the challenges facing them in the Municipality. The approach allowed the generation of rich information about the leadership challenges faced by female managers in the Municipality since it presented the researcher with an opportunity for probing.

## 3.3    TYPE OF RESEARCH

The study adopted an applied research stance aimed at helping the researcher address problems in practice. Male managers still characterize and dominate the workplace and this continues to perpetuate the long-held stereotypes of women and their role in society. Research in this field was crucial to understand the challenges and may contribute to strategies to address them. The results of this research study resulted in recommendations

for exploring the possibility of preparing the way for equality and fairness to prevail between male and female managers, particularly in the workplace.

## 3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

### 3.4.1 Research design

In accordance with the goals of this study, the researcher collected information from the participants, who were female managers in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality. A collective case study was undertaken and participants were selected jointly to provide insight into and enhance understanding of a phenomenon, in this case the leadership challenges for female managers (Swanson & Holton, 2005:330; Johnson & Christensen, 2012:398). The researcher had the opportunity to probe for more information from the participants. The method also provided for an opportunity to produce intensive and in-depth information about the leadership challenges facing female managers in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality.

### 3.4.2 Research population, sample and sampling method

The population in this study was the female managers in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality. The municipality has 388 female Operational Managers at the professional and middle management levels**. Fifteen participants were selected following the non-probability sampling method when the elements are not selected strictly by chance from the population but in a more fortuitous or, alternatively, a more purposeful, deliberate way (Burns & Burns, 2008:207). The female managers included in the study were selected by means of a combination of purposive and availability sampling methods.

The City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality consists of seven regions: regions A, B, C, D, E, F and G. Each region represented a stratum from which participants were drawn. The researcher requested the Human Resources Department Shared Services to provide a list of all the female operational managers who had five or more years' experience in their position, according to their regions. It would have been difficult to include all 388 female

managers for the purposes of this study. However, the researcher ensured that each of the selected regions was represented in the sampling to ensure inclusion and diversity of participants' experiences. The researcher purposively selected female Operational Managers, adhering to the following criteria:

- Five or more years' experience in their positions: The researcher believed that five years' experience in the said management position would have given the incumbents a better opportunity to understand the position they occupied, the responsibility as well as the challenges the position carries;

- Five years in one region, as this allowed the incumbent to understand the dynamics of that particular region;

- Female operational managers from region B, where the researcher is working, were excluded to ensure the researcher's impartiality;

- Participants willing to participate voluntarily;

- Must have signed an informed consent form;

- Participants willing to speak to a male researcher.

### 3.4.3  Data-collection method

For the purpose of this research project, data was collected during face-to-face interviews. The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews, with the guidance of an interview schedule to ensure the standardisation of questions (Ruane, 2005:154). Further, the researcher individually interviewed the participants selected to participate in the research project. To do this, an audio recorder was used for the interview proceedings to accurately capture the data and to ensure the efficacy of, and control over the quality of data and, in the process, assist with transcription and analysis, as this could affect the quality of the data. The researcher consolidated and analysed comprehensive data to give a clear view of the leadership challenges faced by female managers in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality. He explained the intended data-collection method, including the use of a digital recorder, as part of the ethical aspects ensuring informed consent.

The pilot study was conducted with two female managers to determine whether the methodology, sampling, instrument and analysis processes were adequate and appropriate.

This allowed the researcher to obtain feedback on the feasibility of the study. This helped establish the extent to which the research question would yield the required outcomes of the challenges faced by female managers. The pilot study also gave guidance to the researcher as to whether there was a flow and reliability in terms of the research question and the questions the respondents were asked during the research project.

### 3.4.4  Data analysis

Within the context of this study, data analysis was carried out by comprehensively and accurately transcribing every interview. The researcher ensured that information recorded during the interview was thoroughly captured to reflect the exact feelings and meanings of the participants. The researcher used an audio recorder to aid in the comprehensive capture of data from the participants, as delineated in the initial research proposal, and all the participants signed informed consent forms to that effect. The transcribed information was then coded, classified and categorised into themes and conclusions drawn from the generated data. The data analysis process adopted ensured that participants' responses were a true reflection of the challenges faced by female managers in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality.

The researcher took the following steps as a guide in the data analysis (Schurink, Fouché & De Vos, 2011:403-417).

**Step 1: Planning for recording data**
The researcher made appointments with the selected participants. For the purpose of this study, he made use of an audio recorder to record each interview with the participants. This was explained to the participants and each signed an informed consent letter to this effect. The researcher was also prepared to take down field notes during the interviews.

**Step 2: Data collection and preliminary analysis**
Data collection and analysis are inseparable processes. Logically, they go hand-in-hand in building a coherent interpretation of data. This mostly involves checking the data to see what is emerging and identifying feelings or ideas that should be followed up (Gribich in Schurink

et al., 2011:405). In order to establish preliminary commonalities in the participants' responses, the researcher compared each interview conversation and the answers given.

**Step 3: Managing data**

Managing data includes treating field notes and interviews as valuable, and is an important aspect of data analysis. To preserve the data collected, the researcher saved each audio recording on his laptop in a specific folder. Further, these recordings were backed up onto two discs, one for back-up purposes and one for attaching to the research report. The researcher ensured that recorded interviews were fully transcribed. The data was properly labelled according to dates, place and interviewee, to identify the information. Typing and organising handwritten notes gave the researcher an opportunity to familiarise himself with the data before conducting the full analysis. The researcher also relied on the additional notes and comments made during data analysis (Schurink et al., 2001:408).

**Step 4: Reading and writing memos**

The act of writing memos forces the researcher to think about the data, which is when the analysis occurs. By its nature, qualitative analysis involves complex and cumulative thinking that would be very difficult to keep track of without the use of memos (Corbin & Strauss, 2008:118). To keep track of the quality of the data, the researcher made memos and short notes in the margins of transcripts. Kreuger and Neuman (in Schurink et al., 2011:409) maintain that memos consist of short phrases, ideas or key concepts. Writing memos and notes made it easier for the researcher to code the data.

**Step 5: Generating categories and coding the data**

Schurink et al. (2011:410) describe this step as the most intellectually challenging phase of data analysis. It involves breaking down the data into a set of themes, which makes it easier to write the final narrative. The information is grouped into themes by using codes. A code could be linked to a word, a phrase, a sentence, a paragraph or a larger section of the data (Struwig & Stead, 2001:169). This allowed the researcher to focus on identifying salient themes, recurring ideas or language and patterns of belief that link the research participants together. To help identify and organise data into different themes, the researcher used colour markers.

**Step 6: Testing emergent understanding and searching for alternative explanations**

In a research study, it is important to evaluate aspects that are not in the data and establish how these could be essential to the research. Schurink et al. (2011:415) show that this involves searching through the data, during which the researcher interrogates the understanding, searches for negative instances of the patterns, and, if necessary, incorporates them into larger constructs. For the purpose of this study, the researcher scrutinised the data for its usefulness and established whether it answered the research question.

**Step 7: Interpreting and developing typologies**

Interpretation involves making sense of the data. The researcher has to step back and form broader opinions of what is happening in the data (Schurink et al., 2011:416). Data interpretation focuses on holistic illumination, understanding, and extrapolation. It gives meaning to raw data (Struwig & Stead, 2001:172). Kreuger and Neuman (in Schurink et al., 2011:417) state that a first-order interpretation is based on the categories of the people being studied. Thus, in this first-order interpretation, the qualitative researcher interprets data by giving them meaning or making them understandable from the point of view of the people being studied.

**Step 8: Presenting the data**

The researcher presents his data in the form of a research report written according to the guidelines of the Department of Social Work and Criminology at the University of Pretoria. Creswell (2003:193) argues that the basic procedure when reporting the results of a qualitative study is to develop descriptions and themes from the data, to present detailed descriptions and themes that convey multiple perspectives from participants and detailed descriptions of the setting or individuals. Using a qualitative strategy of inquiry, the results may provide a detailed description of their experience. This study explored the leadership challenges faced by female managers in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality. The research report therefore presents how the research was conducted, its findings and its recommendations. Verbatim responses from participants substantiate the research results.

### 3.4.5  Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is essential when executing research. As a result, situations that affect trustworthiness should be addressed (Shamoo & Resnik, 2009:191). Trustworthiness is the focus when evaluating the rigor of qualitative research. It concerns the extent to which a study can take steps to maximise objectivity and minimise prejudice (Rubin & Babbie, 2009:231). Rossman and Rallis (2012:59) maintain that the aim of research is to produce findings that are "worth paying attention to, worth taking account of" – findings that are trustworthy. To ensure the trustworthiness of the data, the researcher had supervision sessions with his supervisor, Dr Prinsloo, who validated the findings presented as verbatim examples, as a true reflection of the research participants' experience. Through member checking, participants received an opportunity to comment on the preliminary conclusions reached by the researcher to ensure the accuracy of the data. The researcher also took into account not to impose his personal values and opinions that would have compromised the credibility of the data.

### 3.5   ETHICAL ISSUES

### 3.5.1  Informed consent and voluntary participation

A letter of informed consent was handed to the participants to request their voluntary participation (Waynberg, Schroeder & Chennells, 2009:29). The informed consent letter included the objectives of the study, the rationale of the study, the procedure followed and the duration of the study. Participants were informed that there was no financial reward for their participation in this research project, and that they were at liberty to withdraw from participation at any stage (De Vaus, 2002:60; Guest & McQueen, 2008:29). The researcher informed the participants that an audio recorder would be used for capturing the interviewing process. The participants were given an explanation of the value of the study and the importance of their participation and were told that the results would contribute to assisting policy-makers in developing strategies for addressing the leadership challenges facing female managers.

### 3.5.2 Confidentiality

In the context of this study, research participants were assured of the principle of confidentiality. Their identity was not revealed at any time during the compilation and release of the research report. The researcher also informed the respondents that the audio recorder would be used during the interview process and that under no circumstance would the recorded content be made public in any way that might compromise their identity.

### 3.5.3 Release or publication of the findings

Both the participants and the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality were informed that the research report would be published and data would be stored in the Department of Social Work and Criminology, University of Pretoria, for a period of 15 years. The researcher explained to the participants and the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality that the final report remained the property of the University of Pretoria.

### 3.5.4 Competence of the researcher

The researcher is a professional social worker with more than eight years' practical experience and was therefore competent to conduct a mini-dissertation. The researcher had already completed a research methodology module (MWT 864) at the University of Pretoria. The research project was conducted under the close supervision of the allocated supervisor from the University of Pretoria.

### 3.5.5 Avoidance of harm

Any social research project runs the risk of harmful consequences. Harm to participants in a research project can be physical, psychological or legal. Avoidance of harm is an important ethical principle in social research. The researcher has to ascertain the risks involved and take steps to minimise potentially harmful consequences (Jackson, 2008:69). The researcher took all the necessary precautions to ensure that the study did not pose any harm to the participants. This was done by explaining the goal and objectives of the research project to

present an opportunity to participants to take an informed decision as to whether or not to participate in the study.

### 3.5.6  Debriefing

Through debriefing, participants learn more about the benefits of the research to themselves and to society in general, and the researcher has the opportunity to alleviate any discomfort the participants may be experiencing. During debriefing, the researcher should try to bring participants back to the same state of mind they were in before they engaged in the study (Hall, 2010:57). Because the researcher is a male person, this may have invoked feelings about their experiences which were projected towards the researcher because the topic was intended to uncover the challenges faced by females. If any participants were to experience harm relating to challenges in the workplace, the researcher would refer them to Keitumetse Sedio, who is a Specialist: Employee Assistance Programme in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality. It was, however, not necessary to do so, as when the researcher followed up after the interviews no participants indicated that they had experienced harm.

### 3.6    PRESENTATION OF EMPIRICAL DATA

In view of the study conducted, the researcher presents the qualitative research data in line with the data analysis process as outlined by Schurink, Fouché & De Vos (2011:403-417 in De Vos, Strydom, Fouché & Deport, 2011). The biographical information about the participants is presented first by means of a table and then the findings of the semi-structured interviews are discussed according to specific themes and sub-themes. The biographical profile of the respondents who participated in the interviews reflects their age, years of experience and their race.

**Table 1: Biographical information**

|     | Age | Years of service on the position | Race |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1.  | 57 | 10 | Black |
| 2.  | 37 | 7 | Black |
| 3.  | 40 | 7 | Black |
| 4.  | 36 | 5 | Black |
| 5.  | 51 | 10 | White |
| 6.  | 48 | 12 | Black |
| 7.  | 42 | 6 | Indian |
| 8.  | 50 | 13 | Black |
| 9.  | 40 | 12 | Black |
| 10. | 48 | 8 | Black |
| 11. | 35 | 5 | Black |
| 12. | 45 | 15 | Black |
| 13. | 36 | 6 | Coloured |
| 14. | 38 | 9 | Black |
| 15. | 37 | 8 | Black |

Fifteen female Operational Managers participated in the study. The participants were between the ages of 35-58 years. The length of service reported by the respondents ranged between 5-15 years of service in their positions. The majority of the participants were black.

## 3.7 DISCUSSION OF THEMES AND SUB-THEMES

**Table 2: Identified themes and sub-themes**

| MAIN THEMES | SUB-THEMES |
| --- | --- |
| **Main theme one: Female managers relate to experiencing glass ceilings** | • **Sub-theme 1**<br>Participants experience the glass ceiling as an unbreakable barrier<br>• **Sub-theme 2**<br>The glass ceiling prevents growth and development.<br>• **Sub-theme 3** |

| | The glass ceiling implies stagnation in the career process. |
|---|---|
| **Main theme two:** **Female managers and the work/life demands** | • **Sub-theme 1** <br> Working extended hours has an impact on home and family life. <br> • **Sub-theme 2** <br> Single parenthood poses even more challenging situations. <br> • **Sub-theme 3** <br> Participants experience difficulty managing dual work-family roles. <br> • **Sub-theme 4** <br> Some women in the workplace regard challenges as advantageous. |
| **Main theme three:** **Female managers and workplace inequality with regard to gender** | • **Sub-theme 1** <br> Participants experience salary disparities. <br> • **Sub-theme 2** <br> Authorities do not pay attention to disparities in salaries. <br> • **Sub-theme 3** <br> Participants experience male domination. |
| **Main theme four:** **Female managers and workplace discrimination** | • **Sub theme 1** <br> Participants experience challenges with regard to recruitment, selection and promotion. <br> • **Sub-theme 2** <br> Participants experience sexual harassment as women in the workplace. |
| **Main theme five:** **Female managers relate to challenged promotional prospects** | • **Sub-theme 1** <br> Women in the workplace experience limited opportunities for promotion. <br> • **Sub-theme 2** <br> Cliques in the workplace influence promotion prospects. |

Direct excerpts from the participants support each of these themes during the interviews. In presenting the findings during data analysis, the researcher will start with the presentation of the views of the participants, followed by the opinions of the researcher and a brief look at

the literature to support the participants' and researcher's views. The themes that emerged from the transcripts were as follows:

### 3.7.1 The concept of the 'glass ceiling'

### 3.7.1.1 Main theme one: Female managers relate to experiencing glass ceilings

The participants' understanding about the concept of the 'glass ceiling' was expressed in the following sub-themes:

**Sub-theme 1: Participants experience the glass ceiling as an unbreakable barrier**

> *My understanding of the concept is that a woman and a minority in this male dominated environment, there is an unbreakable and invisible barrier strictly used as a prejudice against female and other minority group and the whole concept was designed just to, rather slow down the advancement of women in a subtle way. You know, just to make women make them work twice as hard as their male counterparts.*

> *My understanding about glass ceilings is that glass ceilings implies to visible artificial barriers that exist which prevent women from advancing within their jobs, or receiving promotions regardless of qualifications, achievements, skills and knowledge.*

> *My understanding of the concept of glass ceiling is that there is an unbreakable barrier that women cannot penetrate to climb the corporate ladder. It can be through the organisational bias or other politics within the organisation that prevents women from being Directors or Executive Directors.*

> *Glass ceiling… I am thinking of a ceiling which is something high up in the roof and the glass is something that you can see through. My understanding would be, you can see through this glass; there is the top, you want to get to the top but, you find it difficult to get to the top because there are these barriers, the glass becomes a barrier(s). But, you can actually see the top. My interpretation would be, you want to get to the top but, it becomes difficult for you to get to the top because of this barrier. That's my understanding.*

It is evident that female managers in the City of Johannesburg recognise there are unbreakable barriers that defeat their efforts to climb the ladder up to senior management positions within the organisation. Davidson and Burke (2000:16) echo these assertions that the "glass ceiling" constitutes an invisible organizational or perceptual barrier for women and

minority groups, preventing them from moving up the corporate ladder. The glass ceiling is a barrier so subtle that it is transparent, yet so strong that it prevents women and minorities from moving up in the management hierarchy. Thomas and Hersen (2002:24) argue that the glass ceiling may function not only as an advancement barrier, but also as a catalyst to career suicide, whereby no matter what the individual does, corporate decision-makers will view the actions as less than desirable and counterproductive for the company.

**Sub-theme 2: The glass ceiling prevents growth and development**

> *My understanding of the concept, glass ceiling is a concept whereby one has progressed from the bottom level to the top of the level in terms of one's departmental structure and there is no room for further growth and development within the departmental structure.*

> *My understanding is when you reach optimal potential and in your position and experience that you don't have any potential to grow.*

> *… it is a term that is used in the corporate world for one. It's like a metaphor and I believe that glass ceiling is used or I would say if you want to grow in your profession but, there are barriers that are there that are hindering you from growing in that particular field or in my field for that matter. For instance, you find that you would like to be in an executive position. But, because you are a woman for one, it's even worse if you are an African woman. So, you find that there are barriers which are also related to politics.*

> *Yes. I would say that and I will explain why, because I have been doing the job that I am doing for the past five years and it has been so routine that it creates frustrations for me and there is no potential for growth … and its demoralising.*

The participants in the study argued that the glass ceiling adversely affects their growth and development negatively. This should be understood in the context that, as women, they have long been affected by these stereotypes, which restrict women to being at home rather than at work. These stereotypes have for centuries stalled the active participation of women in the workplace and denied them honest opportunities to manage their careers. The South African Board of People Practice Women's Report (2011:13) acknowledges that, historically, women the world over have often been subjected to several kinds of discriminatory behaviour, attitudes and policies. Schwartz and Scott (2010:63) argue that women still suffer from

prejudice and stereotypical beliefs about the role of women in society and that this often limits their chances of reaching top leadership positions.

Jackson (2000:73) maintains that traditional career development frameworks, with their concentration on organizational prerogatives and a reluctance to take account of individual's needs and family circumstances, have favoured male career progress and done little to help and encourage women, especially those with family responsibilities. These women have come to be viewed as having no interest in their career development. On the other hand, Domenico and Jones (2006:5) maintain women's career aspirations have progressed steadily, resulting in their increased workforce participation. The types of careers women choose and the factors affecting their choices are relevant issues to examine, as women continue to work in lower-paid, traditionally female-oriented jobs.

**Sub-theme 3: The glass ceiling implies stagnation in the career process**

> *My understanding means that you have reached the highest level of career development and achievement in one's field or career. It also means that you have reached the highest level that you can reach since you cannot go beyond and there is nothing more to achieve. It also means that opportunities for advancement no longer exist because it means you are going nowhere. You become stagnant and you career seems to be moving within a revolving door. There are also no new opportunities for upward mobility.*

> *I understand glass ceiling as a situation where a person has stagnated and is not moving upward.*

Female managers associate the glass ceiling with the end of their careers. They have reached a stage when their aspirations to upward mobility have come to a definite end. This means that women are unable to visualise themselves beyond the level where they are now and their mobility has come to a complete halt. Swienckowski (2008:60) points out that the average female workers still work in jobs that compensate them with low salaries and few, if any opportunities for advancement. This professional stagnation can affect attitudes and create a dampening effect when it comes to dreaming about future economic success.

**3.7.1.2      Main theme two: Female managers and the work/life demands**


**Sub-theme 1: Working extended hours has an impact on home and family life**


> *…balancing the work and life situation is that sometimes in life situation you are expected to work overtime or to work even on weekends and that really affects the life that one has to lead. I remember when I had to work with the youth. I had to work on Saturdays and Sundays in order to see that programmes are achieved… and that had an impact on my family and my marriage as it leads to mistrust and disorganization within the family.*

> *Performance is key within the City of Johannesburg because one has to be a very productive it means one has to put as many hours as possible and end up spending a lot of time at work and as a result you give minimal time to your family.*

> *That part made my home life better. But, if you look at hours we work sometimes at night. Some groups would phone and say they don't have lights. Then you have to disrupt your own life to go sort out that problem.*

The participants indicated that, owing to work demands, they are faced with limited choices but have to work extended hours so that they meet expectations. This affects the quality time they need to spend with their families. The participants reported that they sometimes had to work during the weekends, which is not compensated in monetary terms.

Rowley and Yukongdi (2009:7) and Sussman et al. (1999:593) claim that many managerial positions require extensive travel, relocation or long working hours. The demands from work can be difficult for women to cope with because of their family commitments. Hence, women often choose to pursue the less demanding jobs that provide them with greater flexibility but are likely to offer them less career advancement and lower salaries.


**Sub-theme 2: Single parenthood poses situations that are even more challenging**


> *The challenges are, I am studying part time. I am a single mother of 3 children who are still at school. I have to assist them with their homework and at the same time I have to study.*

*Me being a single parent, it means that I am the father, mother and everything. So, I have to cover whatever chores or aspects that the father would be doing. So, it's a really difficult and given what one is doing at work.*

*At this stage, I think I have sort of worked out my own way of coping with both. As a single parent, so my work life and my home life were integrated.*

The research brought to light that some of the participants are single parents. This brings the dilemma of extra roles they have to play in integrating work/life demands. With the demanding educational system, which requires parents to be directly involved in helping their children, it makes the working women double their efforts in balancing their work and against fulfilling their children´s educational demands. Single-parent managers are confronted with many stressors in the workplace and at home. Karsten (2006:240) confirms that single parent managerial women face special stressors. Compared to those with spouses or partners, they may have greater work overload, less social support, and more financial strains. Their career development opportunities and job choices may be limited, owing to difficulties in arranging for childcare when attending evening functions, working extended hours, or when travelling overnight becomes necessary. Cooper and Antoniou (2013:312) agree that the challenges of contending with childcare demands may be compounded by other family demands; many low-wage workers also have eldercare responsibilities in addition to their childcare responsibilities.

**Sub-theme 3: Participants experience difficulty managing dual work-family roles**

*As women we are faced with the challenges of balancing the work with life. The career life and family as well as because at times, we are required to work overtimes and these times clash with our family arrangements. At times, you may be called to come to work on a project over the weekend and that creates problems if you didn't make proper arrangements with your family. Like some of us females, we are career women but at times we even like focusing on our families, considering having babies. So, it comes like to be a difficult part to balance the work life and the family one and again when you are studying, you need to have more time to consider your studies.*

*…work and life as a woman you go through… it makes life a bit harder because as a woman you have to be a mother and a manager. At home you are expected to do all your domestic chores and at work as well you are expected to do your professional and managerial work; and at times we as women you get to take so much as an individual whereby you get home, you cook, you got kids, you got other family matters, like maybe your sister passes away, and you still have to make sure you keep your*

*head up high and behave normally; come tomorrow at work, you still have to leave all the challenges that you have at home and be a normal person and you know, be expected to deliver.*

*To be quite honest because from the employer side, the employer expects us to perform certain tasks or projects whereas at times they don't provide proper resources. Like, if you were to work overtime, at times you may find that you are put in a place where you are caught not having had proper arrangements with your family in case you wouldn't be there for your children.*

The participants in this study echoed the argument advanced by Ahuja and Rodhain (2000:814) that many women's early career experiences coincide with that stage of life when they are marrying and starting a family. At this stage in their lives, professional women are faced with trying to manage a career, a home and childcare. The South African Women Entrepreneurs Report (Department of Trade and Industry, 2005:10) contends that women face the pressure of having to run a home, look after children and care for their husband and family.

Yukongdi and Benson (2006: 48) maintain that the greatest challenge faced by women managers is managing their dual role of organizational managers and homemakers. Women experience tremendous stress caused by work overload or even under load. These come from pressure to work harder to prove themselves. Kendall (2012:492) argues that many married women leave their paid employment at the end of the day and then go home to perform hours of housework and childcare. This is referred to as the "second shift"- the domestic work that employed women perform at home after they have completed their workday on the job. Thus, many married women today contribute to the economic-wellbeing of their families and also meet many, if not all, of the domestic needs of family members by cooking, cleaning, shopping, taking care of child members, and managing household routines.

**Sub-theme 4: Some women in the workplace regard challenges as an advantage**

*So basically, I would say as a woman you are very probably challenged and at the same time we are at an advantage because we are able to do both you know, managing work at home and work in the workplace. So, we are able to multi-task.*

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*But in the end I think if you got a strong personality you can balance it.*

This research revealed that, despite the challenges with which female managers are confronted in the workplace, there are valuable positive lessons that can be derived from their experiences. They make use of multi-tasking skills in order to integrate their work and family commitments. Ford and Parker (2008:42) point out that women's work extends from paid and income-generating work to unpaid work, which sustains and reproduces human life, attends to community obligations and establishes and maintains social networks. Musick and Wilson (2008:189) argue that the multi-tasking environment in which women operates means they have been socialised to find the time to do many different things, perhaps simultaneously. This would mean that time spent on one task does not detract from time spent on another.

These positive attributes of multi-tasking extend to bring spin-offs to their families. Trask (2014:231) claims that children learn from the experiences of their working mothers that there are multiple life options available. Children also tend to benefit from the actual income their mothers earn: they access more education and skills training and they may receive increased support from extended kin and family friends. Thus, there are both tangible and intangible benefits accruing to families when women become economically and socially empowered.

### 3.7.1.3 Main theme three: Female managers and workplace inequality with regard to gender

**Sub-theme 1: Participants experience disparities in salary**

> *The salary is a thorn in my flesh. My salary is not the same as the salary of people on the same level. I am treated differently of course, it's me and maybe some few but, I am talking about myself.*
>
> *My counterpart is a white person, we have the same qualifications, performing the same jobs but we are not equally remunerated for some reason I don't know how this happens. Sometimes you will find that us as black people we don't get opportunities to be correctly remunerated.*

*Yes, within the department, you find that on the structure you are on the same level…like, you are operational managers or you are social workers but, you are not earning the same salary. When it comes to issues around travelling allowance you will find that you are expected to log on the kilometres and somebody is not doing the same but, you are finding yourself earning the same travelling allowance with somebody who is travelling about 800 kilometres or less than what you are travelling.*

*I can give you an example of the unequal salaries where you find people with same qualification, and years of experience are doing the same job but getting the different salary.*

This research revealed that there are salary discrepancies in the workplace setting. This has a negative impact on the economy of women and they lag behind in the struggle for women's emancipation. It makes women continuously dependent on their husbands. When women are single parents, it affects their children's upbringing, as they struggle to afford even the most basic necessities.

UNECE (2012:20) mentions that due to the discrepancy in earnings, women accumulate less income than men do over their lifetime. Women's lower earnings increase their vulnerability to poverty, not only during their working lives but also in old age, and increase their economic dependence on a male breadwinner or state welfare. Freedman (2010:7) and Rowley and Yukongdi (2009:7) argue that women's earnings are less than men's for several reasons. Women face institutional barriers and societal attitudes to their capabilities that affect their entry into higher hierarchical levels and managerial positions. Women managers are more likely to be appointed to positions that require less education and are therefore often paid less. Women are still routinely offered lower starting salaries and are paid less than men doing the same work in the same position.

**Sub-theme 2: Authorities do not pay attention to disparities in salaries**

*At the moment it doesn't look like people are paying attention to the unhappiness of the staff, especially the operational staff.*

*There are issues that I have taken up with the authorities to say there are inequalities, there is some discrimination. Things are not done like they are supposed to be done.*

*I think our top management, they are not looking at the issue of grading our positions so that we can all be equal and be able to get equal salaries and because of that, you know, there is no honesty,*

The participants in this study claim that management lags behind on addressing disparities in the workplace. This is the core of discontent and is seen as working against the progress already made to level the field for women's emancipation in the workplace. Glover and Kirton (2006:54) maintain that the pay gap, being an economic issue for governments, has a significantly detrimental effect on employers. Paying attention to this issue is therefore about good management. UNECE (2012:20) states that, owing to the discrepancy in earnings, women accumulate less income than men do over their lifetime. Women's lower earnings increase their vulnerability to poverty, not only during their working lives but also in old age, and increases their economic dependence on a male breadwinner or state welfare.

**Sub-theme 3:  Participants experience male domination**

*I think as the City of Joburg it's not an isolated entity that is all by itself. It is based in a country where women are regarded as and treated as second class citizens. So, women are always discriminated against their gender and nothing else and it's just becomes double painful when it happens to a black female. Men just expect sexual favours to climb the ladder.*

*In our unit, yes there is workplace inequality. In terms of female leaders, we have only one and the other three are all males.*

*Male managers tend to expect female managers to do as they are being told, which is a culture that must be uprooted within our unit.*

*So, I feel that is not equity; it is one of the inequalities that my department has and also that I am the only woman in my department currently. I am the only woman amongst so many males, you know. That is another one, because even if you want to talk to them, they have got that resistance.*

*Yes, I have experienced discrimination from my subordinates and mainly from males who are older than me. For me I think it was on the basis that I am a female, I am still young, they are older than me and also people's experience…you know… within the field. Somebody will feel that maybe they know much better than you. You know… you are just being appointed or you are just being in the position for only maybe 5 years while they have been in the organization for 15 years or 20 years.*

*The other problem is that more females are at the lower rank. So, balance will never be achieved since the males will always get preference and in my department is a female dominated profession. So, certain professions in the City need to be looked into, satisfying the Employment Equity and also looking into balancing the scales that is a problem.*

The participants in the study regard their workplace setting as still being characterised by male domination. The result is the continuation of gender-based discrimination against women. This casts doubts on women's capability to steer the City of Johannesburg in the right direction.

Tlhoalele (2006:3) states that amongst the initiatives central to the national democratic revolution is the need to challenge patriarchal ideology and practices in wider society and its institutions, in the economy, the media, government and the family. Although the number of women in the workforce is increasing and their number in low and even middle-level management positions is also rising, some fields (especially high-paying fields) and higher level organizational positions remain occupied primarily by men (Karsten, 2006:200). This segregation means that women working throughout male dominated-fields and in top-level management are too often tokens in their workgroups. Therefore, although the overall workforce is changing, many workplaces remain segregated.

### 3.7.1.4   Main theme four: Female managers and workplace discrimination

**Sub theme 1: Participants experience challenges with regard to recruitment, selection and promotion**

*For me here is a very difficult…you know…one to say because as far as I have been with the City, reaching the ladder is been very difficult. I have tried so many times it's just not easy. I think it's probably who you know and who you are. It's not like as transparent as you would find in other places whereby you would apply for a job and get it but somehow it's basically who you know.*

*Discrimination is there but in a very subtle way against female managers. It is evident that female managers are being discriminated against on the basis of their gender. As I have mentioned earlier in my conversation that discrimination is that barrier that prevents women from climbing the ranks of management because the upper levels and executive levels are getting many. For example; what is it that in this very*

*organisation, senior management positions are given to males such as at the executive level? These posts are filled by males. It is very few that you will see females at an executive level. What I have seen is that the positions that have been prestige attached are given to men. …. But, with women at upper level, it's those positions that are not well remunerated; that don't have the status, prestige and ego. Qualified women maybe passed over for promotions because they become pregnant as there is pregnancy discrimination or maybe they might become pregnant. So, that is why that I see discrimination against female managers. For example; a job may be offered to a lesser qualified male applicant just because a person is a male. You are being discriminated maybe because of your gender because you might get pregnant.*

*Yes, I am experiencing discrimination in the sense that my belief system is not to badmouth other people. But, you will find that people that have cliques and those that have to badmouth other people in order to go up, are considered for promotions and for post higher within the level. I have experienced nepotism which is a very big challenge within the City. When posts are advertised, there is … management has its own way of appointing people, which has proven to be discriminatory in nature. There was a post that was advertised … where the requirements were, you need to have been in management for 3-5 years, but a person with 3 months in management was appointed. So, for me this is just one example of discrimination that I have experienced.*

*Within the department you also experience inequality in the sense that when one has to apply for a post. A post will be advertised with certain requirements, but when appointments are made the requirements are not taken into consideration. The issue around qualification; qualifications are not taken into consideration … because you will find that an operational manager in another department would be considered just after matric and 1 year of tertiary. Whereas while, within social work department, you need to have a degree and some other qualifications but same salary. Sometimes they even earn more than you earn as a professional person.*

The participants in this study believe the workplace setting has biased practices when it comes to recruitment, selection and promotion. They think that the recruitment processes are easily manipulated to exclude qualified people. It is about whom you know, and women are at the lower end in most cases. This is in complete disregard of the Employment Equity Act (Act no 55 of 1998) and other policies regulating the process of recruitment, selection, promotion and retention in the City of Johannesburg.

Kamoche, Debrah, Horwitz and Muuka (2004:140) state that employees are hired according to objective criteria, such as education, experience and skills. However, job applicants often complain about the lack of fairness in the hiring process. Critics of the hiring process contend that employers prefer to hire people they know or people who have political connections. The

Commonwealth Secretariat (2002:42) states that discrimination in recruitment is unfair and undermines the principle of merit. It is therefore important for recruitment, selection and promotion based on merit rather than on political considerations or nepotism. MacDonald (2004:3) argues that recruitment requires an objective, systematic and planned approach if unlawful discrimination is to be avoided. Both short-listing and selection should be based on candidates´ relevant experience, skills, qualifications, knowledge and talent and should be based on factual evidence.

**Sub-theme 2: Participants experience sexual harassment as women in the workplace**

> *Yes, sexual favour is something that is very common … whereby females will find themselves being victims in order for them to climb the corporate ladder; they need to do sexual favours.*

> *So, women are always discriminated against their gender and nothing else and it's just becomes double painful when it happens to a black female. Men just expect sexual favours to climb the ladder.*

Sexual harassment was considered a major barrier to leadership positions. Women who do not agree to sexual advances from male participants are typically not promoted or else are edged out of the workforce. Boland (2005:4) claims that sexual harassment is more about exercising power than about sex. To assert power and induce fear in their victims is the real foundation of sexual harassment. Mueller et al. (2001:418) argue that existing research on sexual harassment and work outcomes has demonstrated that sexually harassed individuals are likely to experience diminished job satisfaction, loss of motivation to work, job stress, and loss of commitment to work, among several other negative outcomes.

Sexual harassment in the workplace is the reflection of an unequal relationship between a male manager and a subordinate female employee. Gregory (2003:21) argues that this creates employment in a hostile or offensive work environment for the woman. Sexual harassment of women by male co-workers expresses the ancient rule that women should be sexually available to men. Schwartz and Scott (2010:305) confirm that women are subject to sexual harassment, clearly experienced by some of the participants in this research study.

**3.7.1.5 Main theme five: Female managers relate to challenged promotional prospects**

**Sub-theme 1: Women in the workplace experience limited opportunities for promotion**

> *Looking into the situation as it is in the department, I don't see any prospects of going up the ladder.*

> *Looking at my future, it would really depend on my self-motivation as an individual to be able to break those unseen or unbreakable barriers.*

> *Well, I don't think so because based on my experience I tend to feel like you are forever applying for positions but you are not moving anywhere. So, it seems like the advertised posts are like a rainbow that we are forever chasing after or someone is dangling a carrot.*

> *I don't know. I am not very sure, as long as I am still here. Because, presently I am fighting for survival for recognition of my profession and presently I am reporting to someone who doesn't have any clue. I am a manager, but the superior person has no clue of what I do; and I do have ideas of how things can be done but, I am not given that opportunity to articulate my ideas.*

The participants in the study reported that, despite their efforts to climb the organisational ladder, they continue to face bleak prospects for promotion. They are uncertain whether the future holds any hope for them, specifically in their respective departments and the City of Johannesburg in general. There is a dearth of opportunities created for women in the workplace. Where such opportunities are created, women are not given a platform to articulate their views as far as decision-making processes are concerned. Grint (2005:209) states that one important distinction to note is that of class: the overwhelmingly heterogeneous content of many working-class women's jobs with minimal prospects of promotion contrasts sharply with middle-class women's jobs, which can combine both greater levels of autonomous activity and career prospects.

**Sub-theme 2: Cliques in the workplace influence promotion prospects**

> *Like I said, I do not see any prospects within the City. Because, over and above what I have said, you find that there are cliques. So, if you are not part of the clique it*

*becomes impossible for you to be in top management because recruitment is done within those cliques. That is either a clique of politicians or the clique of men who are occupying these top executive positions. So, I do not see myself climbing the ladder up within City.*

The participants in this study are of the opinion that belonging to a certain clique is used as a determinant for promotion in the workplace. Employees who are not part of elite cliques are ostracised. They are treated unfairly when promotion opportunities arise, as they are overlooked in favour of members of the elite cliques. This may affect staff morale and productivity. Stone (2004:167) maintains that the phenomenon of women being shunned, ignored and frozen out to the periphery when they enter the predominantly male workplace has been well documented. Many accounts attest to the power of workplace cliques to exclude, disempower, demoralise, or otherwise disable those who are targeted for exclusion.

Gamonal and Williams (2003:53) maintain that people tend to associate with people who are similar is usually a positive tendency. Those involved share a bond that makes them more comfortable at work because they know each other from other context. Cliques can become hostile to outsiders, particularly in environments where members bond together against what they perceive to be a threat. Lutgen-Sandvik and Sypher (2009:154) state that job performance depends largely on being informed; consequently, outcasts are disadvantaged with respect to their jobs and careers. Such marginalisation negatively affects an employee´s power and influence in the workplace.

## 3.8    CONCLUSION

The study required fifteen female operational managers from the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality. The researcher identified five major themes, each with sub-themes. The findings indicate that female managers are confronted with challenges that stem from unbreakable barriers in the workplace, which impact negatively on their growth and development prospects. Female managers find they remain stagnant at one level and face a bleak future in terms of climbing the ladder up to senior management positions.  The study also revealed that female managers struggle with integrating their work and life demands. They work extended hours. The study also revealed that most of the female managers were

single parents, which made balancing work and the family demands of looking after their children a difficult exercise. There are salary disparities in the City of Johannesburg and the management is still male-dominated.

The research results also reveal that the recruitment and selection process is manipulated to the disadvantage of female managers. This is despite the policies in place that guide the recruitment, selection, promotion and retention of staff within the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality. The situation also renders female managers prone to sexual harassment. The study also reveals that female managers are victims of the view that there are limited opportunities for promotion in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality.

This study has sought to explore the leadership challenges faced by female managers in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality. The findings clearly identified and ultimately confirmed leadership challenges as experienced by female managers in the workplace.

# CHAPTER 4
# CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 4.1    INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher will conclude the study. First, he will identify whether the goal and the objectives of the study were achieved, and answer the question posed by the study. Second, the key findings will be discussed, followed by the conclusions drawn and the recommendations made.

## 4.2    RESEARCH GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of this study was to explore the leadership challenges faced by female managers in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality. The goal of this study was achieved through the following objectives:

- **Objective 1:     Workplace inequality facing women**

Chapter 2 of this study presented the researcher with the opportunity to interrogate the literature on workplace inequality affecting women. The literature review suggests that inequality between women and men in the workplace is a result of social misconceptions about gender and family obligations. This inequality is reinforced through social politics and employment conditions that regulate the expectations of the jobs both genders can do at home and in the workplace. The assertions in the literature review are confirmed by the research findings as presented in Chapter 3. Female managers are faced with salary disparities. These disparities subject women to vulnerability, as they are forced to be dependent on males for economic support.

- **Objective 2: Reaching a glass ceiling in terms of promotional prospects for female managers in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality**

This study also sought to explore how the concept of the glass ceiling negatively affects the promotional prospects for female managers in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality. The literature review in Chapter 2 identified the glass ceiling as one of the major

challenges facing women in the workplace. The glass ceiling is a barrier so subtle that it is transparent, yet so strong that it prevents women and minorities from moving up in the management hierarchy. It may function not only as an advancement barrier, but also as a catalyst in career suicide, whereby no matter what the individual does, corporate decision-makers will view the actions as less than desirable and as counterproductive for the company. In the data analysis conducted in Chapter 3, it is confirmed that female managers in the City of Johannesburg are experiencing the glass ceiling. They blame the lack of opportunities to move up to the senior leadership positions on barriers associated with the misconceptions and stereotypes that say women are incapable. These stereotypes affirm long-held beliefs about patriarchy and male domination, which subject women to compromising power.

- **Objective 3: Work-life balance for female managers in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality.**

This study also sought to explore how female managers in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality are affected by the work/life imbalance. The literature review in Chapter 2 indicated that the biggest challenge faced by women managers is managing their dual role of organizational manager and homemaker. Women experience tremendous stress caused by work overload or underload. For women, overload or underload results from pressure to work harder to prove themselves. The literature review further showed that one reason why many people continue to lead unbalanced lives is that there is nothing they can do to change their circumstances. They may feel trapped by the demands of their job, or their employer's attitude or by the financial demands on them to support themselves and their family. The findings of this study, also in Chapter 3, confirm that female managers face the challenge of integrating work and family demands. They are caught between work and family responsibilities and it is difficult to manage the two.

- **Objective 4: Discrimination against female managers in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality**

This study further sought to explore whether female managers experienced any form of discrimination in the workplace. The literature review reveals that women in the workplace are subjected to gender-based discrimination. Gender discrimination occurs when a person

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is or people are treated unfairly in the work context because of their gender. The data analysis in Chapter 3 revealed that female managers experience discrimination in the work setting. There is a deliberate effort to side-line them in respect of the recruitment, selection and promotion processes. This discrimination not only jeopardises the advancement opportunities for women in the workplace but also subjects them to sexual harassment.

The research question, which this study aimed to answer, was as follows: *"What are the leadership challenges faced female managers in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality?"* This research question was answered during the data collection and analysis stage of this research process. The research clearly identified the leadership challenges faced by female managers in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality.

## 4.3    KEY FINDINGS

This study identified the following key findings:

- The in-depth interviews conducted by the researcher generated a wealth of information regarding the experience of the participants that other methods would ordinarily not have yielded.
- The findings of this research project revealed that female managers in the City of Johannesburg regard themselves as having reached the glass ceiling. There are unbreakable barriers that hinder their growth and development.
- Female managers in the City of Johannesburg are pessimistic about their prospects of advancing to senior management positions.
- The research study revealed that female managers struggle to strike a balance between their work and life demands. There is an overflow of responsibilities in executing both. This is characterised by female managers having to work extended hours and weekends in order to meet the work demands. This presents a challenge to managers who have to look after their children after school and help them with homework. It is difficult to coordinate work and family activities. It compromises the quality time with family and contributes to lack of productivity, as a stressed employee is an unproductive one.
- This study revealed that there are gross salary disparities in the City of Johannesburg. Female managers doing the same job as their male counterparts are not compensated

with the same salary. This challenge is largely the case with most of the positions in the City of Johannesburg. This inequality in salaries hits at the economy of the affected female managers, taking into account the challenges by which they are confronted in terms of providing for themselves and their families. This is the core of dissatisfaction among the female managers in the City of Johannesburg and has the potential to affect employee morale among those who feel affected by the status quo. It appears that there is no standardisation of the process of salary packages, including the locomotion allowances. Hence, employees with the same qualifications, doing the same job, receive different salaries.

- The study also revealed the City of Johannesburg is still a bastion of male-domination. Female managers have limited opportunities for upward mobility. Although strides have been made since the dawn of democracy in the country, the majority of female managers are still on the bottom rung of the ladder.

- The study has revealed that recruitment and selection are subject to manipulation. This is done to allow for people who are not qualified, in complete disregard of qualifications and experience. There is a perception that female employees are overlooked for higher positions in favour of male employees.

- Female managers feel they are discriminated against because of their gender. When employees have an opportunity to apply for a position, they have to face the fact that appointments are largely based on nepotism and loyalty (cliques). In some instances, female employees are expected to grant sexual favours in order to get a senior position.

- This study also revealed that female managers in various departments face limited prospects for promotion in their units. For them, it is a waste of time applying for advertised positions in their respective units. Instead, they negotiate their migration to sister departments or look for positions outside the current workplace. The implications are that valuable skills may be lost in the process, which may destabilise the business units that are on the verge of effective service delivery.

## 4.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

### 4.4.1 General recommendations

In the light of the findings, it is recommended that:

- The City of Johannesburg embarks on exploring and identifying obstacles that prevent female managers from rising to leadership positions. This would include, inter alia:
  - Departments should be encouraged to make succession plans with monitoring mechanisms to ensure full implementation;
  - The City of Johannesburg should consider establishing a skills transfer programme to ensure an empowered crop of female managers;
  - The City should consider establishing a women's development programme which identifies women in the lower positions to be mentored by the senior management.
  - Identify skills gaps in women employees and develop strategies for addressing the situation;
  - The City of Johannesburg should consider establishing women managers' forums to champion the interests of female managers in the workplace.

- The City of Johannesburg should explore mechanisms to accommodate female managers. This may alleviate organisational risk factors such as absenteeism, stress, substance abuse and abuse of leave provisions. Stress can also affect employee morale. Such mechanisms may include:
  - The Employee Assistance Programme Unit should be capacitated to conduct workshops with female managers on the importance of quality work/life balance and stress management.
  - The City of Johannesburg should consider possibilities for establishing childcare facilities in strategic workplace centres, with after-care programmes for children of employees who may opt to work extended hours.
  - Develop a policy on flexi-hours to accommodate female managers who may be struggling with family demands so that they can work from home at certain times.

- The City of Johannesburg should interrogate their Human Resource process of salary negotiations and make offers to the potential candidates to close the gaps in employees' salary packages. People with the same qualifications and doing the same job should be compensated equally. The City of Johannesburg should also pay special attention to their affirmative action and related policies to redress the imbalances of the past as far as female managers ascending to senior leadership positions are concerned. The City of Johannesburg should consider the following:
  o Job grading to ensure that employees are compensated for the work they are doing;
  o Salary audit and adjustments where the incumbents are found to be paid less than their counterparts in line with the City's policy on remuneration;
  o Review of the City's Employment Equity policy to fast-track the process of ensuring parity of representation of male/female managers in the City of Johannesburg;
  o Strengthening the Employment Equity Forums to be in the vanguard of advocacy for the implementation of the Employment Equity Act (Act no. 55 of 1998).

- The City of Johannesburg should revisit their recruitment, selection, and retention policy in order to address some of the shortcomings that may exist. This would be done to ensure that recruitment and selections are conducted in an open and transparent manner that upholds the principle of equality. Such a policy review process would help alleviate the barriers that may be undermining the City of Johannesburg's reputation as a credible employer. It would also assist the City of Johannesburg in ensuring that qualified personnel are considered for the positions, which in turn would translate into effective and efficient service delivery. The Employment Equity Forums should be given more authority, rather than being observers in the process of recruitment, selection and placement.

- The City of Johannesburg should pay attention to staff retention strategies to ensure that they retain the skilled personnel already in their service. This could be done by ensuring that the promotion opportunities are dealt with in an open and transparent manner to ensure fair competition. Priority should be given to employees in the units in which such positions are available, with preference given to female employees as a designated group in line with the Employment Equity Act (Act no. 55 of 1998). This would elevate the representation of women in the management positions in the City of Johannesburg.

**4.4.2  Recommendations for future research study**

The following areas of study are recommended for future research:

- In view of the study finding on work/life balance, future research should focus on:
  - A feasibility study on a comprehensive work/life intervention programme for female employees in the City of Johannesburg is necessary. Work/life balance is critical for the general wellbeing of the employees, as it alleviates organisational risks such as absenteeism, stress and poor working relations.
  - Future research should also focus on strategies for addressing gender-based discrimination in the workplace. Gender discrimination in the workplace remains a thorny issue. Women are at the receiving end of unfair treatment in the workplace. A research project to bring about strategies for addressing this challenge is necessary.
  - Future research should also focus on an evaluation of the effectiveness of the City of Johannesburg's Policy of Employment Equity on redressing the past imbalances among the designated groups (including women) to senior positions. The majority of women remain on the bottom rung of the corporate ladder, despite the equal rights enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic (Act 106 of 1996). Barriers against women's advancement in the workplace should be identified and eliminated to ensure the inclusion of the designated groups (including women).

**4.5  CONCLUSION**

Based on the findings of this study, addressing leadership challenges faced by female managers in the workplace is a move towards the attainment of social justice. It is a sign of a commitment that the workplace has truly embraced the active role women play outside their family environment, to which they have been restricted for centuries. Breaking through the glass ceiling would demand that female managers be accorded an environment that brings out the best in them. Executive management should confront negative perceptions about women and adopt an approach for change. Women are an integral part of mainstream

society and have a valuable contribution to make to the economy and the welfare of society. It is for this reason that gender-based stereotypes must be addressed.

The City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality should interrogate its stance on women's emancipation and reinforce strategies for achieving equity in female managers' representation at their senior management levels. This could be done by ensuring that all barriers of discriminatory practice are removed with the commitment to implement policies to redress the imbalances of the past.

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# APPENDICES

- Ethical clearance letter

- Organisational permission letter

- Informed consent

- Interview schedule

## Appendix 1: Ethical clearance letter

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Humanities
Office of the Deputy Dean

Dear Prof Lombard

Project:           Leadership challenges faced by female managers in the City
                   of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality
Researcher:        MT Ralebona
Supervisor:        Dr CE Prinsloo
Department:        Social Work and Criminology
Reference Number:  29079089

Thank you for your response to the Postgraduate Committee's letter of 15 June 2012.

I am pleased to inform you that the above application was approved (with comment) by the Postgraduate Committee on 12 February 2013 and by the Research Ethics Committee on 28 February 2013. Data collection may therefore commence.

Please note that this approval is based on the assumption that the research will be carried out along the lines laid out in the proposal. Should the actual research depart significantly from the proposed research, it will be necessary to apply for a new research approval and ethical clearance.

The Committee requests you to convey this approval to the researcher.

We wish you success with the project.

Sincerely

Prof Sakhela Buhlungu
Chair: Postgraduate Committee &
Research Ethics Committee
Faculty of Humanities
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
e-mail: sakhela.buhlungu@up.ac.za

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## Appendix 2: Organisational permission letter

**City of Johannesburg**
Department of Corporate & Shared Services: Human Resources Shared Services
Office of the Director

**Joburg**

a world class African city

6th Floor, B Block
Metropolitan Centre
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www.joburg.org.za

## *Memorandum*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| TO | : | Marumo Ralebona<br>Human Development Directorate: Region B |
| FROM | : | Enoch Mafuyeka<br>Deputy Director: Organisational Capacitation |
| DATE | : | 27 June 2011 |
| SUBJECT | : | **RE - REQUEST FOR A PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEAECH STUDY WITHIN COJ** |

This letter is a response to your request for a permission to conduct a research study within the City of Johannesburg employees, which was received by this office on 15 June 2011. You specifically requested permission to use 12 respondents, female Operations Managers with 5 or more years' experience in their positions from region A, C, D, E, F and G.

This office, Organisational Capacitation Unit, grants you permission to conduct your research within the City of Johannesburg employees as requested.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of further assistance.

Kind Regards

Enoch Mafuyeka
Deputy Director: Organisational Capacitation

**Appendix 3: Letter of informed consent**

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

25/06/2014

### INFORMED CONSENT

#### 1. NAME OF RESEARCHER
Mr. Marumo Tshepo Ralebona
Tel: 073 318 8788 / 011 477 2850 (work)

#### 2. RESEARCH TITLE
Leadership challenges faced by female managers in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality.

#### 3. PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY
The purpose of the research is to explore the leadership challenges faced by female managers in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality.

#### 4. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT
The aim of the research is to explore the leadership challenges faced by female managers in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality. The researcher will conduct one-to-one interviews, guided by a semi-structured interview schedule, with the selected participants. The researcher will explore the leadership challenges participants are facing as they discharge their work responsibilities. The interview will take between 45 minutes to an hour. Participants are guaranteed of confidentiality and their responses will be anonymous in the final research report.

#### 5. NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
Twelve (12) to fifteen (15) participants will be selected to take part in the research project.

#### 6. RISKS INVOLVED IN THE RESEARCH STUDY
The participants will not be subjected to any harm and the researcher will make every effort to conduct this research in a manner that will minimize possible harm, however, should the researcher perceive any participants to be negatively affected by the research a debriefing session would be conducted.

#### 7. BENEFITS OF THE RESEARCH STUDY
There are no economic benefits for participating in this research project. However, the long-term benefits are that by talking about their challenges, female managers will be contributing towards the recommendations the research findings will propose to the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality and as a result, strategies may be developed to address them.

**8.	VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION**

Although the researcher seeks my permission to be part of the research, it does not obligate me to do so. My participation is voluntary. I will be free to withdraw my participation at any point, and will experience no negative consequences.

**9.	RECORDS OF PARTICIPATION IN THIS RESEARCH**

The information provided will be protected and my responses will be kept confidential. Recordings and transcripts will be stored in a locked cabinet. The only individuals who will have access to this information will be those directly involved with this research project that have been trained in methods to protect confidentiality. The research information will be safely stored at the Department of Social Work and Criminology, University of Pretoria for a period of fifteen years. The results of this research may appear in publications but participants will not be identified.

**CONTACT PERSONS**

If I want more information about this research, I may contact the researcher as indicated at the beginning of this document.

**11.	AGREEMENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH STUDY**

My signature indicates that I have read, or listened to, the information provided above and that I received answers to my questions. I have freely decided to participate in this research and I know I have not given up any of my legal rights.

**I hereby freely give my permission to participate in this research project.**

**This document was signed at _____ on the _____day of _____ 2013.**

**NAME: …………………………………………………………………………**

**SIGNATURE: …………………………………………………………………**

**SIGNATURE OF RESEARCHER: ……………………………………………
MR MT RALEBONA**

**Appendix 4: Interview schedule**

**SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

**RESEARCH TOPIC: LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES FACED BY FEMALE MANAGERS IN THE CITY OF JOHANNESBURG METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY**

Do you experience leadership challenges in your management position in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality? Please motivate your answer with specific reference to:

- **Reaching a "glass ceiling" in your career?**
  - a. Your understanding of the concept
  - b. Your experience with regard to reaching a "glass ceiling"

- **Work-life demands in your career**
  - a. Challenges in balancing your own work/life
  - b. Experience of this aspect in your work situation

- **Workplace inequality**

- **Discrimination against female managers in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality**