

**Factors that influence the successful transition of black
South African females from self-leadership to
leadership of others**

04995709

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

2 November 2021

Abstract

The literature indicates that the transition from self-leadership to leading others is one of the most complex and challenging transitions any leader must go through in their career. This transition is attributed to several factors: shifting from a functional to a leadership role, developing new competencies and behaviours required to lead others, managing several stakeholders, and navigating a corporate culture that may not support leadership development.

In addition, the leadership transition of black South African females includes additional challenges such as gender discrimination and inequality in the workplace, a corporate culture that lacks diversity and navigating a male-dominated corporate environment.

A qualitative study comprised of 16 semi-structured interviews with black South African females was conducted. Through the research analysis, several key insights were identified. These insights will aid individuals and organisations identify which factors positively influence the successful transition and long-term sustainability of leadership roles for black South African females.

The research provides a model and implementation plan that could practically support individuals and organisations navigate the challenges black South African females face as they transition into leadership roles. In addition, the model elucidates which factors most positively influence the successful transition of black South African females into leadership positions.

Keywords

Career transition, female leadership development.

Declaration

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

Student number: 04995709

Date: 2 November 2021

Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Keywords.....	ii
Declaration	iii
List of Tables.....	vii
List of Figures.....	vii
Chapter 1: Introduction to Research Problem.....	1
1.1 Research problem description.....	1
1.2 Purpose of the research	4
1.3 Scope of the research.....	5
1.4 Research motivation	5
1.5 Conclusion	6
Chapter 2: Literature Review.....	7
2.1 Introduction	7
2.2 Understanding the challenges of women in leadership.....	7
2.3 Organisational barriers inhibiting women development.....	11
2.3.1 Gender discrimination and inequality in the workplace	11
2.3.2 Old boys' network	11
2.3.3 Work-life balance dilemma	12
2.3.4 The “glass ceiling” effect.....	12
2.3.5 Access to sponsors and mentors.....	13
2.4 Understanding leadership theories	14
2.5 Leadership progression	15
2.6 Career development role-players.....	17
2.7 Professional career development.....	18
2.8 Requirements for transitioning from self-leadership to leading others.....	18
2.9 Personal inputs to the transition from self-leadership to leading others ...	19
2.9.1.1 Experiential Learning Theory.....	19

2.9.1.2	The sense of agency.....	21
2.10	Organisational inputs to the transition from self-leadership to leading others	21
2.10.1	Leadership training and development.....	22
2.10.2	Culture and environment enablement.....	22
2.10.3	Mentorship and line management support.....	23
2.11	Conclusion.....	24
Chapter 3:	Research Questions	25
3.1	Introduction	25
3.2	Research questions	25
Chapter 4:	Research Methodology.....	27
4.1	Introduction	27
4.2	Choice of methodology.....	27
4.3	Population	29
4.4	Unit of analysis.....	29
4.5	Sampling method and size	29
4.6	Measurement instrument.....	30
4.7	Data collection process.....	31
4.8	Analysis approach.....	31
4.9	Quality controls	34
4.10	Limitations	35
4.11	Ethical considerations	36
Chapter 5:	Results	37
5.1	Introduction	37
5.2	Sample overview.....	37
5.3	Summary of interviews	37
5.4	Presentation of results	40
5.4.1	Results of research question 1	41

5.4.2	Results of research question 2.....	46
5.4.3	Results of research question 3.....	51
5.5	Conclusion of findings.....	57
Chapter 6:	Discussion of Results	58
6.1	Introduction	58
6.2	Discussion of results: Research question 1	58
6.3	Discussion of results: Research question 2	60
6.4	Discussion of results: Research question 3	62
6.5	Conclusion	64
Chapter 7:	Conclusion and Recommendations	67
7.1	Introduction	67
7.2	Principal conclusions	67
7.2.1	Key challenges faced during the transition to leader	67
7.2.2	Key factors influencing leadership transition	67
7.2.3	Organisational level challenges	67
7.2.4	Risk of not implementing individual input factors	68
7.3	Implications for relevant stakeholders.....	68
7.3.1	Recommendations for black South African females.....	68
7.3.2	Recommendations for organisations.....	70
7.4	Limitations of the research	72
7.5	Suggestions for future research	72
8	References.....	73
9	Appendices	80
	Appendix 1: Interview Discussion Guide	80
	Appendix 2: Informed consent letter.....	82
	Appendix 3: Consistency matrix	83
	Appendix 4: Ethical Clearance.....	84

List of Tables

Table 1: Businesswomen’s Association of South Africa Census (2008-2017)	8
Table 2: Alignment of the interview questions to the research questions.....	33
Table 3: Interview summary details.....	37
Table 4: Details of research participants.....	38
Table 5: Interview details	39
Table 6: Factors assisting the transition to leader	41
Table 7: Ranking of factors positively influencing transition to the leader of others by research participants	45
Table 8: Ranking of factors influencing the transition to the leader of others by research participants	46
Table 9: Challenges faced during the transition to leader	47
Table 10: Types of formal and informal training and development	52
Table 11: Participants who support learning through experience	54
Table 12: Could the organisation have done more to support the transition?	54
Table 13: Recommendations for organisational support factors.....	55

List of Figures

Figure 1: Female leadership representation in South Africa, 2017	10
Figure 2: Companies with female CEO's (2008-2017)	10
Figure 3: Comparisons and differences between sponsorship and mentorship....	14
Figure 4: Drotter’s Leadership Pipeline Model (Leadership Pipeline Institute)	16
Figure 5: The primary pathways and career crossroads to institutional leadership (Freedman, 1998)	17
Figure 6: Experiential Learning Cycle	20
Figure 7: Distribution of research participants by industry.....	39
Figure 8: Formal versus informal training.....	52
Figure 9: The Black South African Females Leadership Transition Model.....	56
Figure 10: The Leadership Transition Model for Black South African Females.....	66
Figure 11: Individual implementation plan (Author’s own).....	69
Figure 12: Organisational implementation plan	71

Chapter 1: Introduction to Research Problem

1.1 Research problem description

The traditional progression of an individual's professional career path begins after achieving the requisite education and qualification required to enter the working environment. As the individual enters the working environment, there is a clear desire and motivation to achieve personal excellence. This personal excellence is achieved by meeting specific standards of excellence and performance levels required for career progression. These individuals focus their time and effort on improving their self-leadership skills, typically becoming functional specialists (Stewart, Courtright, & Manz, 2011).

As personal excellence is achieved in the relevant field of expertise, one's career has a natural progression. This progression is attained as one's contribution to an organisation is recognised, resulting in promotion, which is the beginning of the leadership journey. As the individual moves up the organisational hierarchy, the level of responsibility naturally increases. The individual becomes responsible for managing their performance as well as taking on the responsibility of leading others. This transition is a challenge that many individuals will grapple with during their careers, resulting in a high degree of failure.

This challenge of successfully transitioning into a leadership role is exacerbated for black South African females. During this transition, they experience additional challenges such as gender inequality, a lack of acceptance by colleagues, a lack of confidence in black female leaders, and being a female leader in a male-dominated environment. In addition, they fulfil significantly fewer leadership roles than other race groups in South Africa (Seale, Fish, & Schreiber, 2021).

The definition of "black South African" refers to people of African, Coloured and Indian descent (The Department of Trade and Industry, 2014). The factors that influence the successful transition into a leadership role of black South African females needs to be better understood as these individuals have historically been considerably marginalised in South Africa. Understanding the factors that could benefit these individuals to be more successful in leadership roles is essential for developing this group of people in South Africa.

This transition phase can be considerably overwhelming as many individuals have focused their time, effort, and energy on developing their functional level skills. Unfortunately, the skills that influence self-leadership success may not be as easily transferable to leading others resulting in a high potential for failure. The result is that individuals are promoted to a role that requires leading others without having the requisite skills, experience, and guidance needed to fulfil this leadership role. The promotion into a leadership role is characteristically awarded to employees who demonstrate a high level of technical proficiency. However, they may lack leadership skills or have limited experience in effectively leading others (Griffith, Baur & Buckley, 2019).

As an individual ascends the hierarchical ladder of an organisation, there are various transitional phases. The leadership pipeline model explains these levels of responsibility and career passages within an organisation (Charan, Drotter, & Noel, 2001). In addition, this model describes how the level of responsibility increases, creating additional layers of challenges.

There are varying levels of responsibility and accountability within the organisational hierarchy. The progression within an organisation is typically linear. However, the leadership pipeline model developed by Charan et al. (2001) describes that the ascension from one leadership tier to another requires additional responsibilities to be undertaken by an individual and attracts new challenges that individuals would need to contend with as they navigate the demands of the new level of responsibility.

Furthermore, the key factors that contribute toward making these transitional phases less challenging are not fully understood. This lack of understanding is evidenced when individuals are appointed to a leadership role. They subsequently find it arduous to overcome the many challenges encompassed in this new level of responsibility.

Identifying the factors that influence the transition from self-leadership to leading others could provide individuals with the necessary information and understanding to succeed in their current and future leadership roles. Developing quality leaders for

the future is a critical contributor and source of competitive advantage for organisations. This deeper understanding will also support organisations to achieve their performance goals by ensuring that they can support their employees' transition into leadership roles, ultimately leading to overall organisational success.

The literature describes that an individual can overcome the transitional challenges by developing several vital competencies and behaviours. Certain elements such as aptitude, learning ability, and emotional intelligence could contribute to successfully transitioning within the various levels of the leadership hierarchy (Griffith et al., 2019). In addition, extensive research describes the numerous challenges that newly appointed leaders face and explains how these individuals could overcome these challenges.

The literature indicates that navigating the transitional leadership phases is complex and ever-changing given the constant evolution of the business environment. Moreover, the consistent development of influential leaders and the overall success of an organisation is directly correlated (Wärnich, Carrell, Elbert & Hatfield, 2016).

Many leadership programmes have been identified to support the development of leaders that aim to enhance skills, ability, and knowledge (Subramony, Segers, Chadwich & Shyamsunder, 2018). Given the complexity of leading others, leadership development must be considered a focal area within an organisation, particularly given the ever-changing business environment. The successful transition to leading others will require personal development and the ability to adapt and develop one's capabilities; however, an organisation also plays a crucial role in transitioning an individual into a leader (Snowden & Boone, 2007).

This leadership development includes coaching, mentorship programmes, on-the-job training, and educational upliftment (Wärnich et al., 2016). Subramony et al. (2019) assert that integrating these elements needs to be explicitly integrated through experiences in a real-world context. It is critical to the development of leaders to learn in this context as previous functional roles may not have exposed them to the experiences required to lead others effectively.

There is clear evidence suggesting that inadequately developed and supported individuals at these transitional phases are impeded in their leadership development (Charan, Noel, & Drotter, 2010). In addition, the level of complexity in leading others is constantly evolving as the business environment changes. This ever-changing business environment was poignantly demonstrated by the significant and rapid impact COVID-19 had on the global business environment. As such, this area of leadership must be better understood in the context of South Africa and more poignantly from the perspective of black female South African leaders

1.2 Purpose of the research

The research objective of this study was to gain deeper insights from individuals who have successfully transitioned from self-leadership to leading others. The aim was to understand and analyse the factors that positively support a successful transition. This research specifically focused on the factors that influence black South African females and the challenges that this group of individuals face as they become leaders of others. The research aimed to provide individuals in this transitional phase or anticipate entering this phase with an understanding of the critical factors and practical steps that may be undertaken to navigate this transitional journey by overcoming its challenges.

The research aimed to gain richer insights, specifically from the perspective and experiences of black South African females who have gone through the process of transitioning into a leadership role. The research design allowed additional contributions to the current body of knowledge to provide both individuals and organisations with key insights to support individuals transitioning into a leadership role. In addition, the research aims to provide solutions to those facing challenges in successfully transitioning into a leadership role.

There is a need to explore the challenges individuals experience when transitioning from self-leadership to leading others within an organisation. There are established and ubiquitous literature and theories that have been well-researched in this domain; however, the challenges individuals and organisations face during the leadership transitional phase are still prevalent and create a high level of failure. Moreover, the research aims to edify black South African females and the organisations that employ them of the factors needed to support them on this leadership journey.

The research aimed to learn from the experiences of black South African female leaders who have successfully transitioned into a leadership role. In addition, the research explored the challenges that black South African females face and the factors that supported their leadership transition journey.

1.3 Scope of the research

This explorative research aimed to understand the challenges faced by black South African females and what factors assisted them to overcome the challenges. The research also explored the individual and organisation level factors that positively contributed to the successful transition from self-leadership to leading others.

In summary, the research objectives identified are:

- Understand the factors that are observed to support the transition of black South African females from self-leadership to leading others.
- Understand the challenges that black South African females face when transitioning from self-leadership to leading others.
- Understanding the role an organisation plays in the transition of black South African females from self-leadership to leading others.

1.4 Research motivation

One of the most challenging crossroads for any individual is transitioning from a technical specialist to a leader. There are new behaviours and competencies required to make this transition. If this transition is done unsuccessfully, there are potentially negative consequences at an individual and organisational level. In addition, there are several additional challenges that black South African females face when they transition into leadership. These additional challenges make the transition into a leadership role significantly more arduous to navigate.

The research problem is summarised as the challenges faced by black South African females who demonstrate effective self-leadership skills and must transition into a leadership role that requires them to lead others without having the necessary leadership skills and experiences to equip them for this role. By acquiring a deeper understanding of the challenges and factors that impact the successful transition,

black South African females will meet their career progression goals and enable organisations to support their employees better and achieve greater organisational success.

1.5 Conclusion

This research reinforces the view that successfully transitioning into a leadership role requires individual and organisational level contributions. The findings also support that black South African females face more challenges, making the leadership transitionary phase more complex. The findings show that a combination of factors is required to transition into a leadership role successfully, and additional factors are required to ensure that black South African females progress in their leadership journey in the long term. The findings depict specific factors that positively influence the transition, including those pertinent to black South African females.

These specific factors are categorised from an individual and organisational perspective. The findings could assist individuals in their career aspirations and, more pointedly, their pursuit to ascend the leadership hierarchy. Furthermore, the research findings will assist organisations to develop appropriate structures and initiatives to advance black South African females within leadership positions. This advancement in black South African females would ultimately improve the organisation's performance.

The remainder of the report will include the following sections; a) literature review, b) research questions formulated from the literature review, c) a description of the research methodology applied, d) a description of the research findings, e) a discussion of the research results relative to the literature review, f) a presentation of the main findings of the research, g) recommendations for stakeholders based on the findings, h) limitations of the research and i) recommendations for future research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The research problem and objectives detailed in Chapter 1 indicates a need to explore the challenges individuals face as they transition from self-leadership to leadership of others. The research objectives also indicate that the challenges faced during the transitional phase are at an individual and organisational level. Furthermore, there is a clear requirement to explore and analyse the factors that have assisted those who have successfully transitioned and the specific elements and contributions that influenced the transition, specifically from the perspective of black South African females.

In Chapter 2, a review of the literature and academic theories was undertaken to understand the research and literature relevant to the research problem. The literature review will report the relevant theory base relative to the research problem and critically review the literature pertinent to the research topic. While there is extensive literature on factors that may support this transition, further research is needed to better understand the transition process from a black South African female context.

The literature review focuses on gaining an understanding of the transition from self-leadership to leading others and the factors that are known that support the successful transition. In addition, the literature review encompasses an exploration of the challenges faced by black South African females and the factors which positively influence the successful transition of this group of individuals into a leadership role.

2.2 Understanding the challenges of women in leadership

The participation of females in the workforce has undoubtedly increased over time; however, the number of females within top levels of an organisation remains underrepresented compared to South Africa's population (Derks, Ellemers & van Laar, 2016). This underrepresentation may be attributed to several factors, such as the legacy of a discriminatory political regime pre-1994 in South Africa, gender inequality, and barriers limiting career growth. The racial oppression of black women in South Africa during Apartheid included oppression of race and gender. As a result,

this group of people were the most marginalised in South Africa pre-1994 (Gouws, 2012).

The literature shows that the various barriers within organisations include inequality against women driven by a largely patriarchal dominated history in South Africa (Chengadu & Scheepers, 2017). Certain practices within South African society remain discriminatory towards black women, primarily driven by patriarchal social customs and gender-based stereotypes more than two decades after South Africa became a democracy (Chengadu & Scheepers, 2017). The interplay of gender, race and organisational culture can hinder the development and advancement of black females working in a professional environment (Jaga, Arabandi, Bagraim & Mdlongwa, 2017).

These barriers within organisations create an underrepresentation of black women within top leadership positions. The career advancement of females in South Africa is impaired by barriers that continually create an underrepresentation at managerial levels (Osituyo, 2017). Understanding these barriers is essential for systematically dismantling these barriers for black women in South Africa. This understanding is vital for the country's growth as future growth potential can be unlocked when black women have been developed to their full potential (Bandara, 2015).

Table 1 illustrates the percentage of women in the South African workforce, which indicates that women enter the work environment within entry-level positions on a relatively comparable basis with their male peers. However, the ascension on the hierarchical leadership journey is not comparatively the same.

Table 1: Businesswomen's Association of South Africa Census (2008-2017)

Level	2008	2010	2011	2012	2015	2017
CEO/Chairperson	7,8%	10,4%	9,7%	9,1%	11,6%	11,8%
Directorships	14,3%	16,6%	15,8%	17,1%	21,9%	20,7%
Executive Managers	25,3%	19,3%	21,6%	21,4%	29,3%	29,4%
Women as a % of employed population	42,2%	44,6%	45,1%	43,9%	45,8%	44,2%
Women as a % of total SA population	51,0%	51,6%	51,3%	52%	51,2%	51,0%

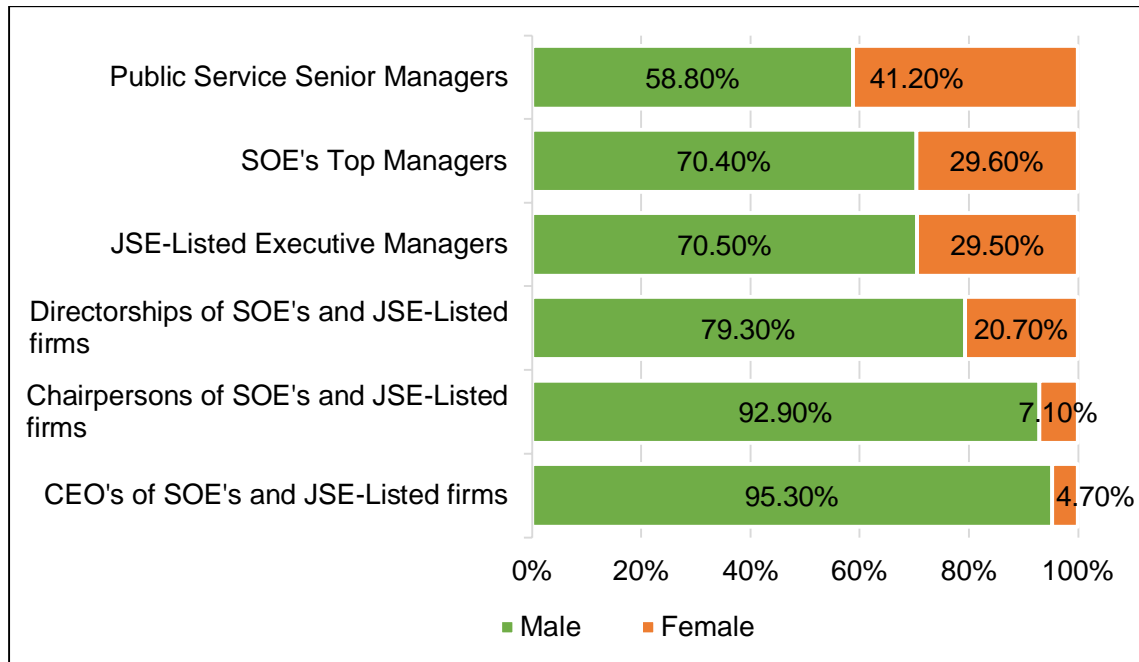
Source: Adapted from Businesswomen's Association of South Africa (BWASA) Census Report (2017)

Based on the census data in the report, 51% of the total population in 2017 were comprised of women but only contributed 44.2% of the employed workforce. These employed women typically work in the lower levels within the organisational hierarchy. For example, the 2017 BWASA census reveals that only 29.4% of Executive Managers and 20.7% of Directors are women.

In the highest levels of the leadership hierarchy, women only account for 11.8% of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or chairperson positions. This shows that women underrepresent top positions within organisations in South Africa. This indicates that organisations are not supporting diversity in corporate boardrooms sufficiently. According to Ng and Sears (2012), executive boardrooms that are gender diverse are more successful, and this diversity is typically driven and advocated by the CEO. This emphasises the importance of having more diverse top-level positions within South African organisations.

Figure 1 illustrates that 4.7% of the evaluated 297 Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE) listed and state-owned South African entities have a female CEO. This translates to 1 in every 21 CEOs being female (BWASA, 2017). The 4.7% female CEO percentage is further reduced when evaluating the proportion of black South African females.

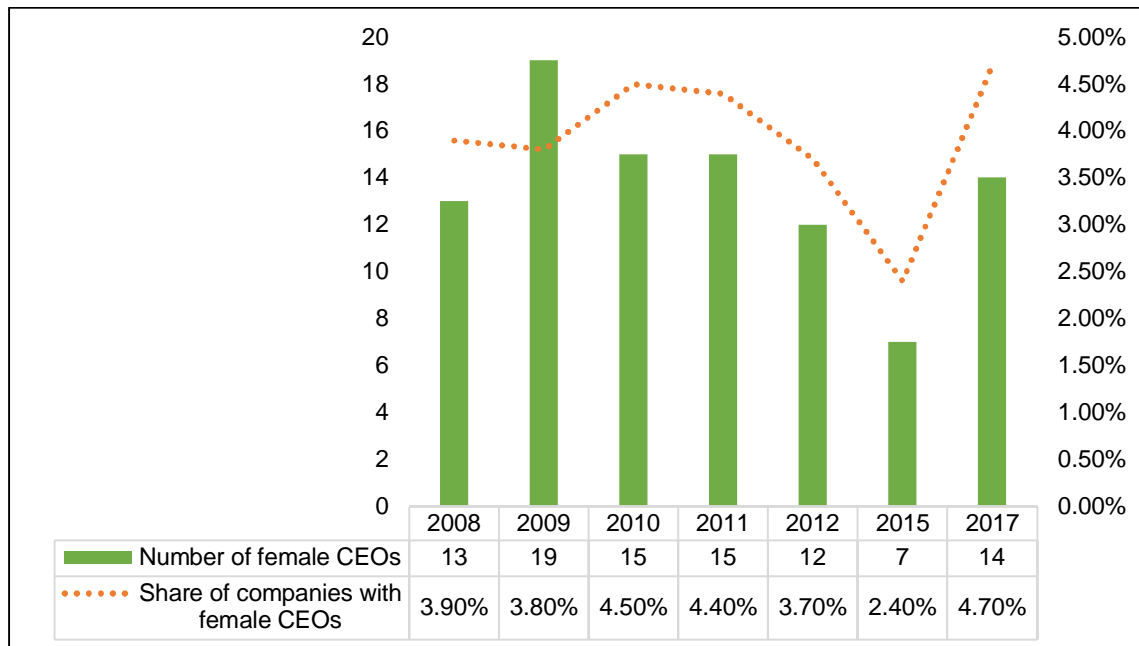
Figure 1: Female leadership representation in South Africa, 2017



Source: BWASA Census Report (2017) adapted

Figure 2 shows the evolution of the number of companies in South Africa that have a CEO appointed from 2008 – 2017 based on the 2017 census. The number of female CEO's has not surpassed 5% of the total number of CEO's appointed over the 9-year period.

Figure 2: Companies with female CEO's (2008-2017)



Source: BWASA Census Report (2017) adapted

2.3 Organisational barriers inhibiting women development

2.3.1 Gender discrimination and inequality in the workplace

The barrier of gender bias is akin to discrimination which creates a condition within many organisations resulting in a higher proportion of males being employed than females (Koch, D'Mello & Sackett, 2015). This gender bias practice occurs within all hierarchical levels and in instances where males and females are comparably qualified for a position within an organisation. This results in fewer females being employed or promoted (Koch et al., 2015).

The gender bias is likened to a gender stereotype where women are perceived as less effective than males. This gender bias creates a systemic issue where women need to prove themselves significantly more than their male counterparts to achieve performance goals (Heilman, 2012).

The need to prove oneself as a black woman is influenced by the need to be accepted and recognised by peers, as the preconception is that a black woman is unsuitable and unqualified for the leadership role. As women ascend the leadership hierarchy, gender stereotyping increases and women face additional forms of discrimination (Chang & Milkman, 2019). It is perceived that women must work significantly harder and longer to be promoted to senior positions (Fallahi, Mehrad & Rahpaymaelizehee, 2015). Creating opportunities to ascend the leadership hierarchy is not sufficient to promote and drive female advancement as it requires consistent development at each hierarchical level (Yavorsky, Keister, Qian, & Nau, 2019).

2.3.2 Old boys' network

The literature reveals that another barrier contributing to black female underrepresentation within top-level positions is the inability to grow the necessary talent pool. An "old boys club" attitude can heavily influence the pool of talent from which organisations can draw new talent. This term refers to a concept where a network of males has been formed to promote and develop social and business connections among a male-only elite club (Chengadu & Scheepers, 2017). The inference of this "old boys club" mentality creates a limitation on the pool of talent, which naturally excludes females (Chengadu & Scheepers, 2017).

The old-boy network is purported to encompass males who have met at locations such as a university or other leisure activities where social bonding can occur (Fallahi et al., 2015). When decisions about workplace promotions or appointments are being made, there is an inclination and affinity to favour those that one interacts with within similar networks. This attitude results in women being segregated and excluded from these decisions (Fallahi et al., 2015).

2.3.3 Work-life balance dilemma

The literature reveals that certain organisations do not have an environment and culture that supports females requiring a more substantial work-life balance than their male peers, particularly given the onerous responsibilities of the maternal role within a family that a woman needs to fulfil (Hofmeyr & Mzobe, 2012).

Women can encounter social strain to fulfil traditional gender and social roles, such as maternal responsibilities. These responsibilities tend to clash with responsibilities in the workplace (Gibson, Hardy, Baur, Frink & Buckley, 2015). At the CEO level, one is at the helm making critical business decisions. The level of responsibility and accountability is most significant as one oversees several aspects of the business. This can be an arduous undertaking and requires long working hours. The lack of women in senior leadership could be attributed to the strain required to balance work and family responsibilities as women are inclined to hold more domestic responsibilities and consequently cannot always work longer hours (Haile et al., 2016).

Therefore, given these working conditions, balancing work and family commitments is exceptionally challenging as females may find it hard to be accessible to work demands outside typical working hours (Jaga et al., 2017). Consequently, this struggle may dishearten women to pursue higher positions in the workplace that require additional levels of responsibility.

2.3.4 The “glass ceiling” effect

The concept of a glass ceiling is a term relevant to females who fail to ascend certain levels of an organisation hierarchy. This glass ceiling is described as a metaphorical barrier that has been created by institutional biases that prevent experienced and qualified females from ascending within their organisations (Sharif, 2015).

This glass ceiling has the effect of making females, especially black females in South Africa, less competitive than their male counterparts once a particular position within the organisational hierarchy has been reached (Nekhili & Gatfaoui, 2013). It is further asserted by Yavorsky et al. (2019) that the glass ceiling does not end at limiting the promotion of women, but it also extends to restricting women financially, particularly within roles that are the same as their male counterparts (Withisuphakorn & Jiraporn, 2017).

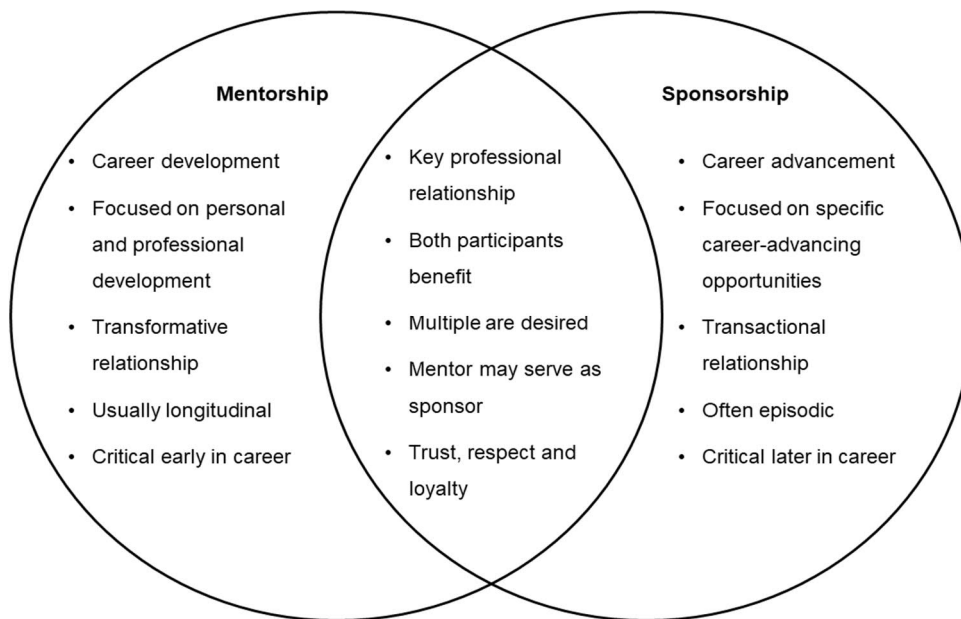
2.3.5 Access to sponsors and mentors

Receiving coaching and mentorship has associated benefits within career and leadership development (Ayyala, Skarupski, Bodurtha, Gonzalez-Fernandez, Ishli, Fivush & Levine, 2019). It is purported that mentorship is an essential element of career advancement and leadership development.

Ayyala et al. (2019) asserts that whilst mentorship performs a critical role in career development; women benefit significantly more from sponsorship. In addition, there is great benefit in having an individual advocating for an individual within the workplace (Travis, Doty, & Helotzer, 2013).

The role of the sponsor creates a platform for the sponsored individual to be more visible within an organisation. This platform is pivotal to ascending the leadership hierarchy or being recognised for achievements and efforts (Ayyala et al., 2019). Figure 3 illustrates the key similarities and differences between sponsorship and mentorship. It further emphasises the need for women to understand the distinction between the two concepts, to benefit from its advantages.

Figure 3: Comparisons and differences between sponsorship and mentorship



Source: Ayyala et al., 2019

2.4 Understanding leadership theories

Significant research has been conducted in the field of leadership. There are numerous frameworks and theories related to leadership in current literature (Ahmed Khan, Nawaz & Khan, 2016). The core leadership theories which emerged during the twentieth century include Great Man theory, Train Man theory, and Laissez Faire theory (Ahmed Khan et al., 2016). In addition, the literature reveals that self-leadership is influenced by internal and external factors (Ahmed Khan et al., 2016). There is widespread research on transformational leadership, authentic leadership and self-leadership, (George, Sims, McLean, Mayer & Mayer, 2017).

Self-leadership is an essential element that provides an understanding of the context of this research. The researcher aimed to understand the factors that influence self-leadership as these could be relevant in understanding whether it plays a role in the transition to lead others effectively. The literature review reveals that self-leadership is described as “an individual’s ability to self-regulate and lead their own life by setting goals, following a clear plan, and self-correcting as one progresses” (Pina e Cunha, Pacheco, Castanheira & Rego, 2017).

2.5 Leadership progression

The literature review reveals significant research conducted on understanding what factors contribute to leadership success and the various types of leadership styles that influence the progression of leaders within an organisation. For example, Charan et al. (2001) developed a six-passage model that asserts that organisations should develop leaders at different stages and levels within an organisation. This ensures that an organisation has a strong pipeline of leaders as these individuals ascend the organisational hierarchy.

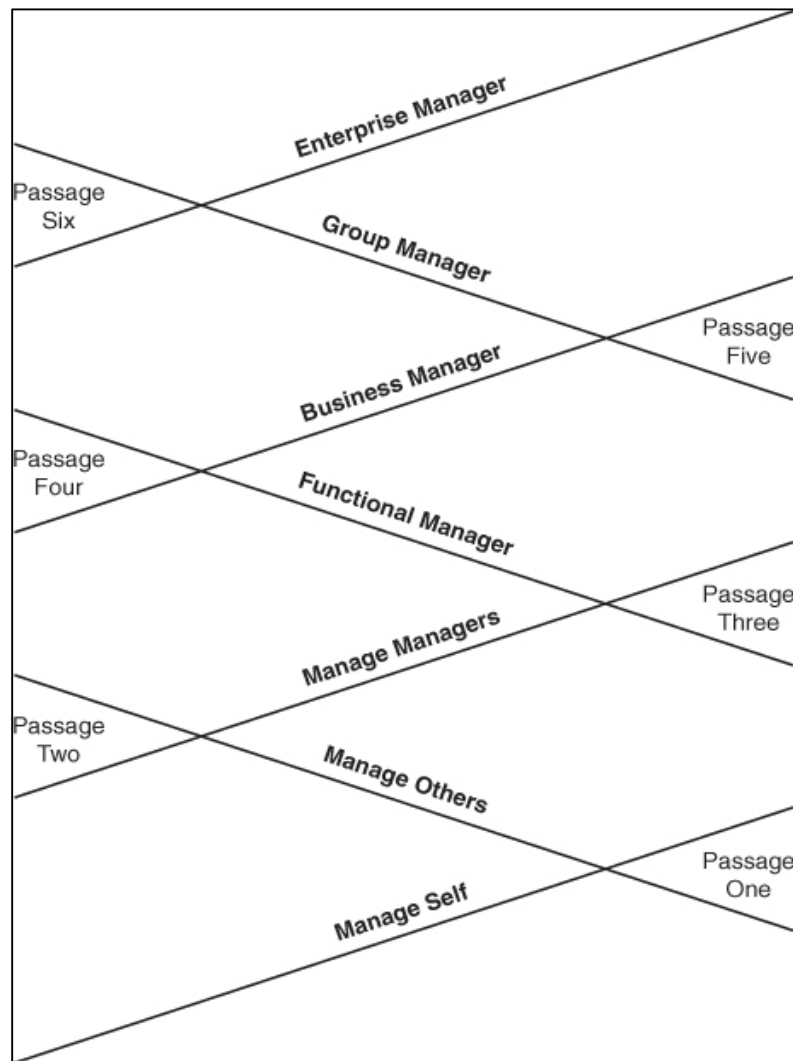
A hierarchical structure is typically developed by organisations, demonstrating how accountability and responsibility levels increase as one ascends this leadership hierarchy. This ascension incentivises individuals within an organisation to continually develop their skills to achieve career progression (Charan et al., 2010).

The leadership pipeline model categorises the various levels of leadership in a hierarchical structure. The model is constructed as a six-passage model, which provides organisations with a framework to cultivate leaders across all levels of management (Yammarino, 1999). In addition, the ability for organisations to develop employees internally builds trust between the employee and employer (Jena, Pradhan, & Panigraphy, 2018).

The leadership pipeline model shows a progression that is linear as one progresses from one level to the next. It is argued that not all organisations adopt all the levels of this hierarchical structure; however, elements of this structure are characteristically apparent with many organisations (Drotter, 2010). This is aligned to the progression of leadership as described in the leadership pipeline model.

The leadership pipeline model further describes the transitions between various levels and indicates the required new skills and capabilities per level. These skills include the core capabilities required for the new role and the necessary changes that need to be adopted by an individual (Charan et al., 2010).

Figure 4: Drotter's Leadership Pipeline Model (Leadership Pipeline Institute)



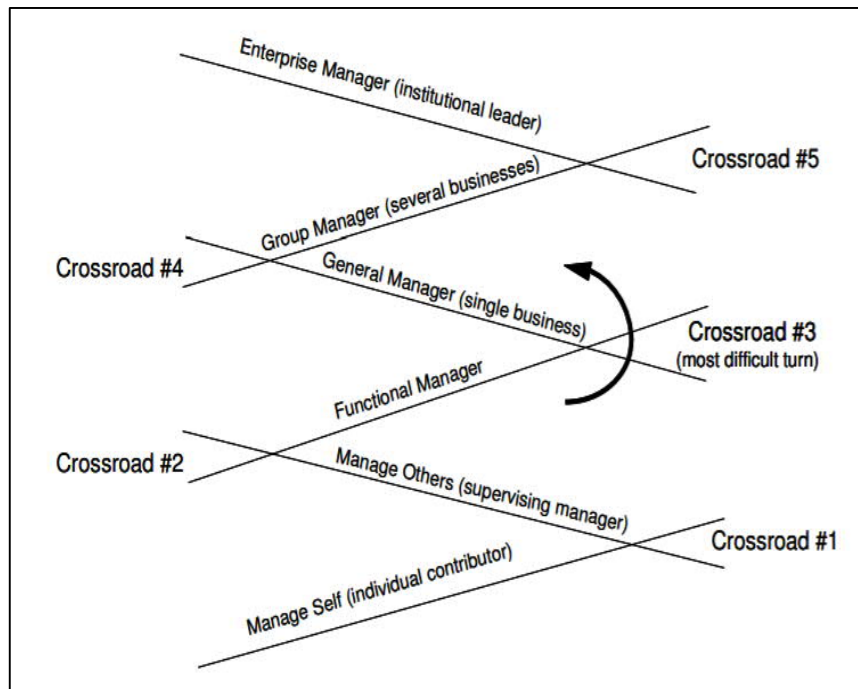
Source: Drotter, 2010

Figure 5 illustrates a developed theory by Freedman (1998) called the Pathways and Crossroads to Institutional Leadership, similar to the leadership pipeline model. This theory describes specific pathways and crossroads when ascending within an organisation. It describes the various pathways starting with an individual contributor pathway and ultimately progressing to the final pathway of institutional leader.

This model describes the change in accountability that is required at each level. The model also describes various principles that individuals need to consider as they move into various leadership roles. For example, Freedman (1998) asserts that external support for an individual is vital to support transitional success. The principles required to successfully fulfil the new role require personal introspection and careful adoption by an individual, which is difficult to achieve. The frameworks

of Charan et al. (2001) and Freedman (1998) is corroborated by Watkins (2012), who purports that the transition between different leadership hierarchy levels is challenging, especially as one makes the transition from a functional to generalist role (Mallaby, Price & Hofmeyr (2017)).

Figure 5: The primary pathways and career crossroads to institutional leadership (Freedman, 1998)



Source: Adapted from Freedman, A.M. (2005).

2.6 Career development role-players

Understanding the role-players are essential for career development. The ability to transition into a leadership role will require adjusting values and mindset (Charan et al., 2010). The requirement to develop one's skills is both an individual and organisational responsibility. To develop oneself requires several elements such as commitment, resilience, a willingness to adapt and skills development through learning (Arghode, Brieger & McLean, 2017).

The role of an organisation is pivotal to an individual's career development. It is important to align this development to the organisation's objectives. An environment that encourages skills development and employment growth will improve organisational success (Turgut & Neuhaus, 2020).

2.7 Professional career development

The concept of career development is described as “a process of managing experiences, learning and change to achieve a preferred future” (Kononiuk, A., & Pająk, Gudanowska, Magruk, Rollnik-Sadowska & Kozłowska, 2020). An individual’s need to progress their career aspirations is correlated with their proclivity to develop themselves professionally (Griffith et al., 2019). Therefore, it is essential to understand the need for career development as this provides the basis for understanding what influences the successful transition to leading others.

Individuals typically view hierarchical seniority and rank as career progression (Griffith et al., 2019). The desire to develop oneself professionally is a natural inclination and measurement of advancement. Personal career development is additive to developing new skills and expertise, which enables successful career progression.

The complexity of the level of change needed for career development and the ascension of the leadership hierarchy is substantial and thus requires a more multifaceted understanding to successfully navigate the transition (Griffith et al., 2019).

2.8 Requirements for transitioning from self-leadership to leading others

The leadership pipeline model outlines the key factors that are required in each career passage. These factors tend to be focused on skills, time application and work values (Charan et al., 2010). Charan et al. (2010) further explains that individuals require adjusting their behavioural and work values to manage various career passages.

To lead others more effectively requires an inclusive and transparent strategy to enable better performance (Charan et al., 2010). This can be achieved through soliciting support from those whom one leads. In addition, it is crucial to provide regular engagement and support, assign work and tasks clearly and build relationships with transparent reporting and accountability (Charan et al., 2010).

As an individual transitions into a leadership role, there is a requirement to shift from

a technical and independent attitude to a more influential, collaborative and team-centred attitude. This requires delegation, clear communication and providing supervision (Arghode, Brieger & McLean, 2017). Furthermore, as a leader, one must maintain high levels of self-performance whilst balancing the responsibilities of leading subordinates (Freedman, 1998). The research suggests that the successful transition to a leadership position requires gaining practical experience, building one's knowledge base and developing new skills and competencies (De Meuse, Dai & Wu, 2011; Mallaby, Price & Hofmeyr (2017).

The transition from self-leadership to leading others requires a clear shift from self-reliance to produce outputs to leading others responsible for output delivery, which requires the individual to adapt and change their mindset (Freedman, 1998). In addition, the leadership transition requires the adoption of specific attributes or strategies which enables those that one leads to perform more effectively. These strategies include building trust through experiences, being more transparent, promoting inclusion and providing regular support to subordinates (Charan et al., 2010).

2.9 Personal inputs to the transition from self-leadership to leading others

Several contributions are required from a personal perspective that promotes the effective transition from self-leadership to the leadership of others. These personal contributions and considerations include experiential learning, personal accountability, adult learning techniques, understanding the barriers to effective learning, resisting the barriers to change, and understanding one's learning style. These personal contributions are further explained in 2.8.1.1 and 2.8.1.2.

2.9.1.1 Experiential Learning Theory

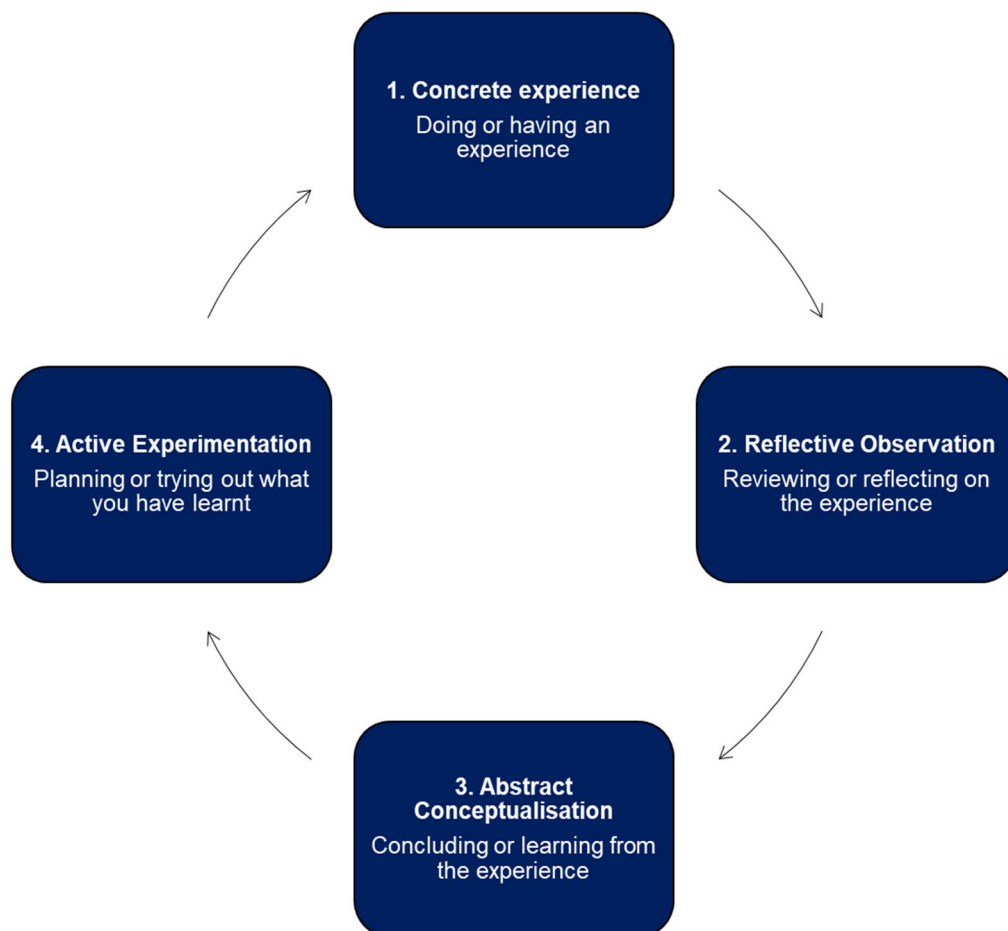
Adult learning is primarily achieved through application and real-world experiences. This learning style is described as adult learners who prefer learning through observation and understanding the importance of learning through experience as this form of learning resonates most distinctly with adults (Becker & Bish, 2017).

The experiential learning theory is a framework that explores the three components of learning through experiences, namely 1) the learning cycle, 2) the learning space, and 3) the learning style (Kolb & Kolb, 2017). Finally, personal accountability relates

to individuals understanding that they are the primary agent responsible for personal growth and development. This sense of personal accountability is a crucial component for achieving professional growth (Strahan, 2016).

The theory of experiential learning provides a framework for understanding how learning takes place through lived experiences. The learning cycle comprises four distinct stages, which are required for optimal learning to take place. Figure 6 illustrates the experiential cycle, which begins with having an experience, then requires reflection of the experience, followed by learning from the experience and finally active implementation of the learning.

Figure 6: Experiential Learning Cycle



Source: Adapted from Kolb & Kolb (2017)

2.9.1.2 The sense of agency

The sense of agency can be described as individuals being the agent for their learning (Williams, 2017). It is the understanding that knowledge is developed over time and achieved through lived experiences. An individual learns from failure and can draw knowledge from others when required (Williams, 2017).

Having a sense of agency is a critical factor for professional growth (Strahan, 2016). An ability to engage effectively with others is essential for professional development (Strahan, 2016). The sense of agency directly impacts an individual's personal development, which impacts an individual's successful transition into a leadership position.

2.10 Organisational inputs to the transition from self-leadership to leading others

The role of the organisation in supporting the transition from self-leadership to leading others is significant. There are several elements that the organisation can implement and actively promote to ensure that individuals feel supported and encouraged to become influential leaders.

The implementation of formal training initiatives for employees is essential for employee growth. This could include formal training delivered by external institutions and on-the-job training (Wärnich et al., 2015). Learning through experiences is an essential component in developing leadership skills. The need for a combined and integrated approach to learning through formal learning programmes and learning directly from others creates enhanced leadership efficacy (Becker & Bish, 2017).

The literature reviewed shows that the organisation should consider implementing focused training and initiatives to develop leadership skills. In addition, the ability to create a conducive culture and environment that encourages individuals to become more effective leaders is pivotal to organisational success. Sections 2.9.1, 2.9.2 and 2.9.3 provide additional detail related to the organisational contributions required for successful leadership transition.

2.10.1 Leadership training and development

Training and development initiatives improve employee behaviours, knowledge, and overall skills. This enables employees to perform more effectively, thus executing the organisational strategy (Wärnich et al., 2015). Furthermore, there is a direct correlation between the investment made in training and development initiatives and leadership efficacy (Aragon & Valle, 2013).

These training and development initiatives can be categorised as informal and formal learning. Becker & Bish (2017) describes formal learning as “learning which takes place outside of the working environment in a structured format as a planned intervention intended to assist the achievement of the desired outcome. Informal learning is considered to take place unplanned in a work environment. Informal learning transpires through experiences that may arise in a work context. The immense value derived from on-the-job training and experiences gained off-the-job is imperative for employee development (Thomas, 2008).

2.10.2 Culture and environment enablement

There needs to be a safe environment that endorses individuals to feel supported as this type of environment facilitates optimal learning. As peers engage with each other constructively, learning is optimised (Kolb & Kolb, 2017). An environment where individuals feel safe to make mistakes creates a culture of enablement as individuals feel less threatened and more comfortable feeling vulnerable (Kolb & Kolb, 2017). In addition, individuals require an environment where they can practice and develop their skills, thus embedding the learnings (Kolb & Kolb, 2017).

The organisational culture plays an essential part in leadership development (D’Netto, 2008). An organisational culture incorporates elements of the behaviour, attitudes and practices within an organisation (D’Netto, 2008). An organisational culture that supports employee learning and development will thrive and achieve the desired organisational strategy. A culture that encourages diversity and inclusion positively influences team performance (Perrault, 2014). In addition, an organisation that supports gender diversity directly correlates with the advancement of women to senior leadership roles (Perrault, 2014).

2.10.3 Mentorship and line management support

Mentorship refers to a relationship between two people focused on career development, with guidance provided by the senior individual to the younger individual, aimed at enhancing the career of the younger individual (Chengadu & Scheepers, 2017).

Effective mentorship has enhanced the careers of countless individuals as it is an essential element to career advancement as it places the mentee in a more favourable position than their counterparts who do not receive mentorship (Maloney, 2012).

The support from a line manager plays a vital role in developing leaders (Turesky & Gallagher, 2011). The mentorship and coaching from a line manager can be achieved through encouragement, supervision and providing support (D'Netto et al., 2008). The lack of access to suitable mentors is a real challenge for females in leadership positions (Fitzimmons, 2012), particularly as they traverse the leadership hierarchy. The career advancement of women in South Africa is positively impacted by mentorship and is, therefore, a crucial element for leadership (Mcilongo, Strydom & Kariena, 2021).

The utilisation of coaching initiatives and programmes is critical to the development of leaders. The promotion of coaching activities provides the necessary support for leaders, as coaching allows for knowledge sharing between the individual being coached and the individual performing the coaching (Milner & McCarthy, 2018).

The most effective coaching involves sharing one's own lived experiences (Milner & McCarthy, 2018). This coaching relationship mutually benefits the individual being coached and the organisation as it provides a safe platform to share experiences and build trust (Becker & Bish, 2017).

2.11 Conclusion

The literature review provides insight into understanding the transitions within leadership and the elements of the leadership pipeline model. The literature review demonstrates that the key components influencing the transition from self-leadership to leading others require the necessary skills, practical experience, time application and work values.

In addition, the literature review describes that the successful transition requires the involvement and contribution of an individual and an organisation. The review provides insights into the various factors that influence the transition. The literature review shows limited research on the factors that influence the leadership transition of black South African females.

In conclusion, the research aimed to contribute to this domain's known academic literature and theory development. In addition, the research explores the contributions required to successfully transition from both the individual and organisational perspective and the challenges and barriers that hinder the transition. Finally, the aim is to provide black South African females and organisations with a deeper understanding of this subject matter, which will improve the successful transition from self-leadership to leading others.

Chapter 3: Research Questions

3.1 Introduction

The research aimed to understand the challenges faced by black South African female's as they transition into a role that requires leading others successfully. In addition, the research aimed to understand the positive and negative factors influencing the leadership transition.

The research questions are the critical questions that the research process will address. This process will aim to provide new insights into the topic being researched. Based on the literature review in chapter 2, there is a need for further research. This research seeks to answer the following research questions:

3.2 Research questions

Research question 1:

What factors support the transition from self-leadership to leading others within the context of black South African females?

This research question seeks to better understand the factors that positively influence the transition of black South African females from self-leadership to leading others. Understanding these factors is essential for individuals who move into a leadership position, as the literature reveals several challenges that leaders face when transitioning into a leadership role.

Research question 2:

What challenges do black South African females face when transitioning from self-leadership to leading others?

This research question seeks to understand the challenges that black South African females face when transitioning into a leadership role. The literature reveals that individuals are faced with several challenges as they move into a leadership role.

The literature also reveals that black South African females face additional challenges. This research question aims to delve into these challenges from the perspective of black South African females and their lived experiences, which will

provide deeper insights into this topic.

Research question 3:

What role does an organisation play in transitioning black South African females from self-leadership to leading others?

This research question seeks to garner a greater understanding of the role that is played by the organisation in the leadership transition process, specifically the contributions and inputs which are perceived to be the most beneficial to those transitioning into a leadership role from the perspective of black South African females.

Chapter 4: Research Methodology

4.1 Introduction

Chapter 4 sets out the research methodology chosen for this study by using the research problem as a basis. The research methodology provides a framework for the method and approach of how a research study should be conducted (Ng & Coakes, 2014).

A qualitative exploratory approach was selected for this research. The research methodology describes the methodology adopted, the selected population, sampling method, sample size, unit of analysis, measurement instrument, the data gathering process, ethical considerations, quality controls and limitations of this study.

4.2 Choice of methodology

The purpose of the research was to explore the factors that contribute to successfully transitioning from self-leadership to the leader of others from the perspective of black South African females. The definition of “black South African” has been taken from the South African government’s definition of “black people”, which means natural persons of African, Coloured and Indian descent (Department of Trade and Industry, 2014). Therefore, the study involved understanding the lived experiences of black South African females who have transitioned from self-leadership to leading others.

An exploratory study was conducted as this research follows the philosophy of interpretivism by understanding the meaning in human behaviour (Neuman, 2000). This allows for the interpretation of a research participants’ insights into the factors influencing the transition into a leadership role. In addition, the research aimed to provide deeper insights into this field of study (Saunders & Lewis, 2018) as the challenges faced by black South African females within leadership positions are significant, and deeper insights gained in this domain could help those seeking to transition into a leadership role.

The philosophy that underpinned the research was an interpretivism approach based on social research. The research participants shared their unique perspectives based on lived experiences (Saunders & Lewis, 2018). This approach allowed the participants’ observations and unique perspectives to be analysed. The objective of

interpretivism is not the formation of a new principle but to evaluate and improve interpretive theories (Antwi & Hamza, 2015). A qualitative, inductive method was used to understand current literature better and develop the existing empirical data (Saunders & Lewis, 2018). An inductive approach focuses on generalisations rather than specific observations (Saunders & Lewis, 2012) and arises from participants' discussions (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006).

The interview process allowed the researcher to ask participants to share their personal experiences, particularly describing the factors and challenges influencing their transition. The process investigated the detailed account of individual lived experiences, analysed to develop further knowledge in an under-research area, being the perspective on this subject from black South African females. The aim was to understand the shared experiences of the research participants (Guest et al., 2006). This allowed the researcher to identify unknown elements in the subject domain (Denscombe, 2014). The researcher utilised a mono-method methodological choice for data collection.

The researcher collected data via interviews conducted virtually. The interviews were semi-structured, allowing flexibility in how the questions were posed to the research participants. In addition, the approach allowed for a more superfluous discussion generating more robust responses (Saunders & Lewis, 2018). The approach allowed the research design to evolve rather than having a complete rigid design at the start of the study. This approach was selected as it was challenging to envisage the outcome of the interview interactions as there were diverse viewpoints of the participants and their effect on the results of the study (Antwi & Hamza, 2015).

Narrative enquiry was used to interpret the personal life experiences of the individual participants who have transitioned from self-leadership to leading others (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The research is cross-sectional as the data was collected at a point in time (Rindfleisch, Malter, Ganesan & Moorman, 2008; Zikmund, Babin, Carr & Griffin, 2013). The specific topics and key themes within this field of study were identified based on the literature and further explored during the interview process. The key themes were drawn from the factors that impact the transition, including aspects from an individual and organisational perspective.

4.3 Population

A population is defined as “a group of members who share common traits” (Saunders & Lewis, 2012; Zikmund et al., 2013). According to Zikmund et al. (2013), at the commencement, the definition of the target population is critical to ensure that suitable sources are identified for the data collection. The population for this study is described as black South African females who have undergone the transition from self-leadership to the leadership of others.

The population was not limited to an organisation or industry as the research participants work in a broad range of industries. For this research, a leader is defined as an individual who leads others directly. These individuals held positions where they have led or currently lead others and have done so for at least two years.

4.4 Unit of analysis

The unit of analysis refers to the unit of text to be categorised during the analysis of the relevant information (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2015). The research includes the unique perspectives and insights provided by the research participants through their lived experiences, which form the units of analysis of the research (Saunders & Lewis, 2018). Therefore, the unit of analysis was the influential factors and challenges experienced by the interviewees. These relate to the interview participants' individual experiences, which inform the final unit of analysis for this research.

4.5 Sampling method and size

The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with the research participants. A purposeful, homogenous, and non-probability sampling method was followed to ensure that participants provided greater insights into the field of study (Saunders & Lewis, 2018). The researcher interviewed 16 participants. A homogenous, non-probability sample of 16 research participants was suitable for inductive, exploratory research.

The interviewees were formally approached via email as the primary form of contact. The email addresses were obtained from the researcher's professional network, which had access to the email addresses of the research participants. Before the interview, a consent form was shared with the research participant, and all Protection

of Personal Information Act protocols were followed, including the non-distribution of any participant information. The participants have similar traits and characteristics, specifically regarding their race and gender as defined in a South African context. This includes having transitioned from self-leadership to leading others.

This number of research participants were monitored intently to determine the point of saturation. The point of data saturation occurred when additional data added no new codes (Silverman, 2015) or where additional data provides little to no new insights into the research question and objectives (Saunders & Lewis, 2012).

A combination of purposive and snowball sampling was used. Denscombe (2014) states that purposive sampling occurs when the best information can be obtained by selecting research participants based on known characteristics and not via random selection (Zikmund et al., 2013). Snowball sampling is where earlier sample members ascertain subsequent members after the first sample member (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). The sample was selected utilising personal references and the researcher's judgement.

The researcher requested referrals from interview participants to relevant participants who met the sampling criteria. This technique was effective as referrals utilised the researcher's available network (Denscombe, 2014). In addition, Bloomberg and Volpe (2012) state that the appropriateness of purposive sampling in selecting research participants yields key insights into the subject investigated.

Utilising convenience and judgemental sampling enabled access to research participants, and a sample of 16 research participants was selected from the homogenous group across ten industries. After 14 interviews, the point of data saturation was reached. At that point, no additional themes emerged from the fourteenth interview (Guest et al., 2006).

4.6 Measurement instrument

To ensure that adequate data was collected, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews. The interviews were conversational, which allowed deeper insights to be shared (Saunders & Lewis, 2018). The semi-structured interviews allowed for flexibility in how the questions were asked. The interview process allowed

for superfluous discussions, which produced more valuable data collection as open-ended questions were utilised (Saunders & Lewis, 2018).

The research guide included pre-defined topics which were aligned to the relevant literature. This navigated the discussion to attain reliable qualitative data. The interviews were flexible to allow the research to garner more authentic responses from the participants. A pilot interview was conducted to ensure that the interview questions had a natural flow, were understood by the participants, and gained the requisite insights. The interview questions were phrased to convey a broad view to avoid leading the participant and influencing the responses (Ritchie & Lewis, 2013).

4.7 Data collection process

The primary data was gathered from research participants via semi-structured interviews. The researcher thoroughly prepared for the interviews to ensure a seamless interview process. In addition, an interview guide (see Appendix 1) was shared with the research participants before the interview to ensure that the discussion with the research participant was focused and well-directed.

Given the current COVID-19 impact on the health and wellbeing of society, the interviews were conducted on a virtual platform. The research participants were afforded the option to utilise any virtual platform they preferred and were comfortable using to ensure that any anxiety about using unfamiliar technology was eliminated. The researcher ensured that the interview was engaging by demonstrating a strong interest in the participant sharing their lived experiences.

The research topic was introduced to the participants at the interview's commencement, promoting engagement (Rowley, 2012). The confidentiality of information was emphasised via the consent letter to ensure that the research participants shared their insights and experiences (see Appendix 2). This was effective as all research participants agreed to have the interviews recorded.

4.8 Analysis approach

The analysis was continuous whilst the data was collected (Woo, O'Boyle & Spector, 2017). The interview notes and recordings were used to transcribe the interviews. A coding technique for data analysis was used. The data was then grouped into themes

utilising the codes. The data collection and analysis were done concurrently for continual data refinement (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The data analysis process commenced during the early stages of data collection as this early immersion assisted the researcher to move back and forth between the development of critical concepts and the collection of data (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2015).

The responses from the participants were specified into unique codes. The codes were then grouped, which resulted in themes being identified. Bloomberg and Volpe (2012) assert that the thematic analysis allows for a detailed description and complex understanding by identifying common themes and concepts based on the data. These themes were analysed and interpreted relative to the research objectives and relevant literature.

The analysis of the data utilised thematic and frequency techniques to assist in identifying themes and commonalities of the data. Identifying themes allowed the data to be synthesised and made succinct to allow the data to be understood more simply. The use of coding saturation was used to identify the point of data saturation which occurred after 14 interviews as no new themes developed.

The frequency analysis allowed for common factors to be identified through the lived experiences shared during the interviews. The data analysis process occurred over three weeks with continuous review to ensure that the quality of research was maintained. During the data analysis period, the responses to the interview questions were reviewed.

The researcher utilised a spreadsheet to capture the codes and refined them using analysis software ATLAS.ti. The themes were finally assessed against the frequencies, which provided crucial insights for the research findings. The interview questions were aligned to the literature review and research questions to ensure consistency and the validity of the data collected via a consistency matrix (see appendix 3).

Table 2: Alignment of the interview questions to the research questions

Research question	Interview question
<p>Research question 1: What factors support the transition from self-leadership to leading others within the context of black South African females?</p>	<p>Question 4: What do you believe were the most important factors that assisted you in this transition?</p> <p>Question 5: Did you receive on-the-job training when you became a leader of others? If so, please elaborate.</p> <p>Question 6: Did you receive formal training when you first became a leader of others? If so, please elaborate.</p> <p>Question 7: Based on the above contributions, which do you feel assisted you the most in your transition for the leadership role?</p> <p>Question 8: Do you believe that learning through experiences helped you in the transition to leader?</p> <p>Question 9: Do you believe that formal learning initiatives assisted you in the transition to leader?</p> <p>Question 11: Please rate each of the below items from 1 – 5 indicating the positive impact that each had in assisting your transition to a leadership role. 1 being no impact and 5 being greatest impact.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. My own personal efforts 2. Line manager or internal support/guidance

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Informal training 4. Formal training 5. Real-world opportunities to apply new skills 6. Mentorship or guidance from an individual or individuals outside of your organisation
<p>Research question 2: What challenges do black South African females face when transitioning from self-leadership to leading others?</p>	<p>Question 3: When you first became a leader of others, could you describe the most significant challenges that you faced?</p>
<p>Research question 3: What role does an organisation play in transitioning black South African females from self-leadership to leading others?</p>	<p>Question 10: Do you believe that your organisation could have done more to assist you in your transition into a leadership role? If yes, please elaborate.</p>

4.9 Quality controls

Research needs to be transparent and credible (Given, 2008). Research is considered reliable if it utilises analysis procedures and data collection methods that achieve consistent results (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). In addition, qualitative research must demonstrate consistency and reliability (Saunders & Lewis, 2018).

To ensure the authenticity of data, the data collection method accurately measured what it intended to measure (Saunders & Lewis, 2018). Data authenticity and reliability are used frequently to evaluate qualitative research for trustworthiness clarification (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012).

The researcher aimed to ensure data authenticity by ensuring that the questions in the interview guide resulted in the provision of adequate data to meet the research objectives and answer the relevant research questions (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). All interviews were recorded using the recording function on the relevant virtual meeting platform. In addition, the researcher took hand-written notes on specific key

insights that were discussed in the interviews. The video recordings were then transcribed and verified for accuracy.

The researcher prepared thoroughly for the data collection process, and all interviews were conducted consistently. The researcher did not navigate participants to certain conclusions. A pilot interview was conducted to ensure that data was reliable and valid. A rigorous approach ensured the authenticity of the data gathering process and analysis. This ensured that the data collected was thorough (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

The researcher ensured reliability by asking the same questions in the same way to prevent bias of results (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). This was achieved using an interview guide during the semi-structured interviews to ensure standardisation of the interview questions. In addition, reliability was confirmed by evaluating and reviewing the interview transcripts several times to identify any obvious errors made during transcription.

To ensure that the confidentiality of the research participants remained intact, no sensitive information such as names or contact details has been included in the study. The research participants were informed of their right to withdraw at any stage during the interview process. Furthermore, all transcriptions were anonymised, and the data collected was used confidentially and stored without identifiers.

4.10 Limitations

The data collection encompassed semi-structured interviews. The research was cross-sectional and provided data at a point in time. This created a limitation as current insights provided by the research participants may change over time. Furthermore, the purposive and homogenous sampling used cannot be deemed a representation of the population; as such, no generalisations were made of the research results (Saunders & Lewis, 2018).

The virtual nature of the interviews may have restricted the information shared by the research participants. This may have resulted in less data being shared in the interview, less data collected and a reduction in the overall quality of the information shared (Lub, 2015). In addition, the researcher's lack of experience may have

resulted in interview bias and observation error (Saunders & Lewis, 2018).

4.11 Ethical considerations

Before conducting the interviews, the researcher obtained ethical clearance from the Gordon Institute of Business Science (University of Pretoria). In addition, the researcher submitted a participant consent letter and interview guide as part of the ethical approval process. The researcher commenced the data collection process once the ethical clearance approval was received (see Appendix 4).

Chapter 5: Results

5.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out the results of the interview findings for each research question detailed in chapter 3. In addition, this chapter includes information about the research participants, a summary of the interviews conducted, and data analysis utilised to establish themes.

The interview questions were developed to align with the research questions (see Table 2). The initial part of the interview guide was designed to ensure that responses were answered without thematic influence. The research participants were first asked to provide data such as their job title, industry, and the length of time that they have been in a leadership role.

5.2 Sample overview

A total of 16 semi-structured interviews were conducted. All research participants were female and met the criterion of black South African. In addition, the participants occupied a leadership role where they led individuals within their respective teams. The participants work in varying industries which provided the identification of common themes across different industries.

5.3 Summary of interviews

Table 3: Interview summary details

Detail	Quantity
Total number of interviews conducted	16
The total duration of interviews	387 minutes and 31 seconds
Shortest interview	19 minutes and 8 seconds
Longest interview	35 minutes and 24 seconds
Average time	23 minutes and 7 seconds

Table 4: Details of research participants

No.	Gender	Job title	Industry	Tenure as leader
1	Female	Human Resources Manager	Non-profit	~10 years
2	Female	Attorney at Law	Legal services	~20 years
3	Female	Project Leader	Information Technology	~5 years
4	Female	Programme Manager	Banking	~11 years
5	Female	Group Environmental Manager	Mining	~4 years
6	Female	Director	Legal services	~3 years
7	Female	Learning and Development Partner	Petrochemicals	~10 years
8	Female	Process Engineer Manager	Banking	~5 years
9	Female	Senior Manager	Telecommunications	~6 years
10	Female	Chief Executive Officer	Automotive	~11 years
11	Female	Senior Quantity Surveyor	Construction	~6 years
12	Female	Director	Legal services	~4 years
13	Female	Executive Manager	Construction	~9 years
14	Female	Senior Research and Development Manager	Engineering	~6 years
15	Female	Head: Group Regulatory Services	Petrochemicals	~5 years
16	Female	Head: Emerging Markets	Banking	~4 years

Figure 7: Distribution of research participants by industry

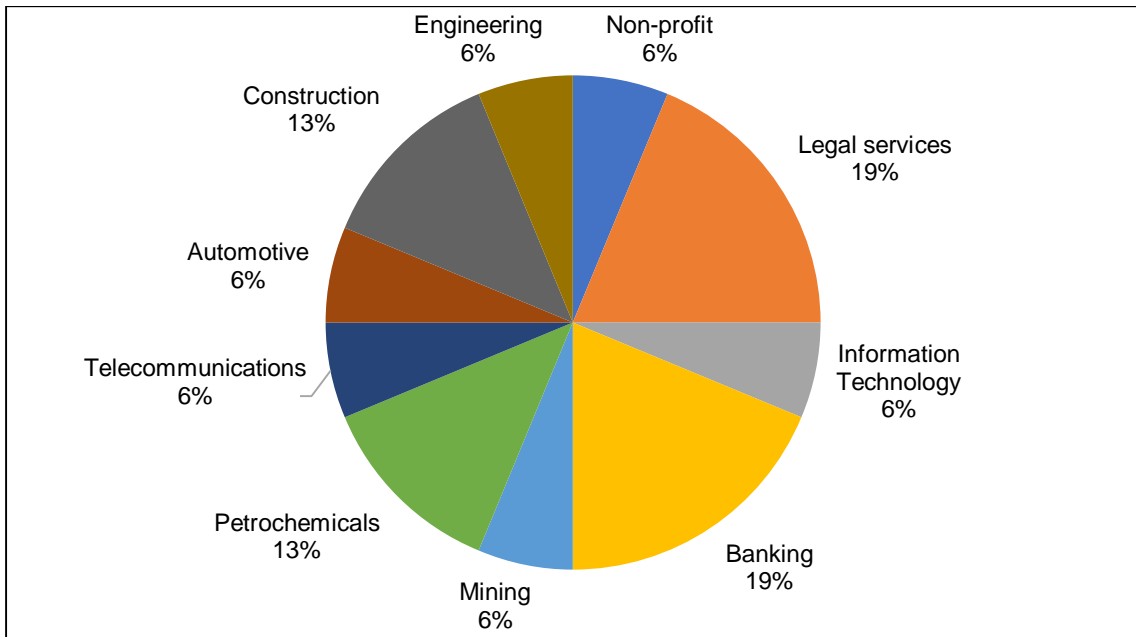


Table 5: Interview details

Participant	Date of interview	Duration of interview (minutes)
1	22 September 2021	23:07
2	23 September 2021	30:47
3	27 September 2021	20:23
4	28 September 2021	28:43
5	28 September 2021	21:09
6	28 September 2021	23:52
7	29 September 2021	20:47
8	30 September 2021	19:48
9	30 September 2021	25:12
10	30 September 2021	19:08
11	01 October 2021	23:49
12	02 October 2021	35:24
13	05 October 2021	20:26
14	06 October 2021	21:38
15	07 October 2021	24:12
16	08 October 2021	31:07

The interviews were conducted virtually on an online video teleconferencing programme. The duration of each interview was conducted within the stipulated time as per the interview guide and participant consent form. The interview recordings excluded the preamble and introduction phase of the interviews, where the researcher welcomed the participants and ensured that the participants were first settled, given the virtual nature of the interview.

All participants confirmed that the interviews be recorded for purposes of transcription. The interview recordings were transcribed using a software application called Otter.ai and further refined by the researcher. These transcriptions were inputted into a programme called ATLAS.ti, which allows for data to be analysed using frequency and thematic analysis.

5.4 Presentation of results

The results of the research are presented in accordance with the research questions detailed in chapter 3. Specific coding was utilised to analyse the data in the interviews. Specific phrases and key themes were extracted from the transcriptions of the interviews and recorded in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet developed by the researcher. Each construct was grouped according to a theme, thereafter the constructs were sub-grouped, and the frequencies of these constructs were collated to derive a ranking.

Research question 1

What factors support the transition from self-leadership to leading others within the context of black South African females?

Research question 2

What are the challenges that black South African females face when transitioning from self-leadership to leading others?

Research question 3

What role does an organisation play in transitioning black South African females from self-leadership to leading others?

5.4.1 Results of research question 1

What factors support the transition from self-leadership to leading others within the context of black South African females?

The interview questions posed to the research participants required the participants to describe the factors that assisted them the most when transitioning from self-leadership to leading others. This was an open-ended question which aimed to identify the most supportive factors based on the experience of the research participants. Nine themes were identified from 16 codes. The data was analysed using frequency analysis to identify the most to least predominant factor.

Table 6: Factors assisting the transition to leader

No.	Theme	Number of mentions	Interview reference
1	Opportunities to apply leadership skills	15	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15
2	Personal effort and abilities	14	1,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,13,14,15
3	Mentorship (including sponsor or advocate)	9	1,4,8,9,10,12,13,14,16
4	Company culture acknowledging diversity and inclusion	8	2,4,5,6,8,9,12,13
5	Training and development	8	1,2,3,4,6,8,9,10,13
6	Coaching	6	4,7,8,9,14,15
7	Line manager support	4	1,2,15,16
8	Internal support and guidance	3	1,4,12
9	Robust leadership structure and pipeline	2	2,10

Based on the number of mentions in the interviews, the results indicated three tiers of importance. The first tier includes the two most predominant factors being 1) opportunities to apply leadership skills (experiential learning) and 2) personal effort and abilities. The second tier included mentorship, company culture, and training and development. Finally, the third tier includes coaching, line manager support, internal

support and a robust leadership structure.

The research participants specified that **opportunities to apply leadership skills within an organisation** was the most influential factor in the successful transition to a leadership role. The following quotes from the interviews relate to having adequate opportunities to develop and apply leadership skills:

“The more I practised, the more decisions I made and activities that I did, the more confident I became as a leader” – Interview 1

“I was given the platform to practically apply and implement the learnings” – Interview 2

“The lack of practical implementation was the demise of many that may not have had this exposure” – Interview 2

“Learning comes from, in any case, the mistakes that you make” – Interview 7

“Experience more than anything helped me. Experience played a key role in my transition” – Interview 11

The second highest theme that emerged from the data collection process was the research participants **personal efforts and abilities** that they could draw from to navigate the transition to a leadership role.

The following quotes from the interviews relate to personal efforts and abilities:

“You need that personal zeal as you can easily become discouraged as it is not easy in a male-dominated industry or organisation. You need to have that personal zeal, that personal effort” – Interview 1

“It takes hard work and dedication and having a resilient spirit to want to learn and persevere” – Interview 10

“Given the challenges that we have to face in this environment, you need an

attitude of a winning mentality. Always asking questions. Always wanting to learn. This has been something that has helped along this leadership journey”
– Interview 10

“The biggest battle in leadership is the internal battle. You need to overcome any internal constraints if you want to be a good leader.” – Interview 15

Mentorship and guidance was the third-ranked factor, which shows that receiving mentorship and coaching from an individual is essential as one transitions into a leadership role. In specific interviews, the theme of mentorship was mentioned quite vociferously as the primary factor contributing to the successful transition to a leadership role. However, another finding from the research about mentorship is the lack of access to mentors, specifically female mentors, who can provide much-needed guidance in transitioning to a leadership role.

The following quotes from the interviews relate to mentorship:

“Having a mentor was quite influential” – Interview 4

“The one thing that I believe has helped me to navigate this male-dominated environment is mentorship” – Interview 9

“He [the mentor] gave me the exposure that elevated me.” – Interview 13

“Mentorship for me had greater impact because this person understood what I was going through” – Interview 13

A **company culture that acknowledges diversity and inclusion** was mentioned as the fourth factor. The promotion of a culture that enables diversity and inclusion was a factor that assisted the transition to a leadership role. The research participants felt that the organisation that acknowledged the importance of diversity and inclusion understood how essential it is for black South African females to thrive in the workplace. This culture made them feel trusted and accepted and gave them a sense of belonging as they transitioned into leadership.

The following quotes from the interviews relate to culture:

“One of the main challenges that I faced was, I don't know how to explain it, let me say, a patriarchal environment, or rather a boys club” – Interview 1

“So it's important to acknowledge diversity, but most importantly, enable an environment that's inclusive. And I think more so for me as a black female, that's only ever worked in male-dominated environments.” – Interview 9

“Because I firmly believe that, you know, the culture or environment that gets created, it depends on the kind of leader that you are forever an example talking about male-dominated environment. In my previous industry, I could feel I was in a boys club, because the leader that was they facilitated that and conducive environment for me as a female” – Interview 9

Receiving training and development was the fifth-ranked factor which ranked the same as company culture. Further insights on training are detailed in section 5.4.3. The sixth-ranked factor was **coaching** with six mentions. The research participants mentioned that coaching from individuals inside and outside of the organisation was an important factor contributing to their leadership transition. The research participants mentioned that the coaching they received from individuals outside of the organisation provided them with an objective and independent view of their challenges. The coach allowed the research participants to reframe and consider different perspectives as they navigated the various challenges they faced. The following quote from the interviews relates to coaching:

“Having a person [a coach] that is guiding you. They are leading you, and they are showing you what to learn about yourself, and actually helping you discover yourself” – Interview 15

The **support from one's line manager** was ranked seventh. The support from a line manager was mentioned on several occasions as a keep factor that supported the transition to a leadership role, as on-the-job training and guidance provides the necessary support. In addition, it creates an environment where the individual feels safe to ask questions and make mistakes as they feel supported to do so. The

following quote from the interviews relates to line manager support:

“My line manager had a vision and the passion to empower and equip me with the tools and support which assisted the transition along the leadership journey” – Interview 2

A closed question was posed to the research participants, which required them to rate the impact of factors that could have impacted their transition to a leadership role. The factors that were rated include 1) own personal effort, 2) support from a line manager, 3) information training and development, 4) formal training and development, 5) opportunities to apply new skills in practice, and 6) mentorship or guidance from an individual or individuals outside of the organisation.

Table 7: Ranking of factors positively influencing transition to the leader of others by research participants

No.	Factor	1 No impact	2 Low impact	3 Moderate impact	4 High impact	5 Greatest impact
1	Own personal efforts	- 0%	- 0%	1 6,25%	4 25%	11 68,75%
2	Support from line manager	1 6,25%	3 18,75%	1 6,25%	6 37,50%	5 31,25%
3	Informal training and development	1 6,25%	1 6,25%	3 18,75%	4 25%	7 43,75%
4	Formal training	1 6,25%	1 6,25%	7 43,75%	6 37,50%	1 6,25%
5	Opportunities to apply leadership skills (experiential learning)	- 0%	1 6,25%	1 6,25%	3 18,75%	11 68,75%
6	Mentorship of guidance from individuals outside of your organisation	- 0%	3 18,75%	1 6,25%	3 18,75%	9 56,25%

Table 8 reflects the above data in a different format by grouping the ranked categories 1 and 2, and 4 and 5 to illustrate more clearly the ranking of table 7.

Table 8: Ranking of factors influencing the transition to the leader of others by research participants

No.	Factor	1-2 No to low impact	3 Moderate impact	4-5 High to greatest impact
1	Own personal efforts and abilities	- 0%	1 6,25%	15 93,75%
2	Opportunity to apply new skills	1 6,25%	1 6,25%	14 87,50%
3	Mentorship of guidance from an individual outside of your organisation	3 18,75%	1 6,25%	12 75%
4	Informal training and development	2 12,50%	3 18,75%	11 68,75%
5	Support from line manager	4 25%	1 6,25%	11 68,75%
6	Formal training and development	2 12,50%	7 43,75%	7 43,75%

The above table illustrates that research participants felt that their efforts and abilities were the most positively influential factor assisting the transition to leadership. This was then followed by having the opportunity to apply new skills. Thus, the research participants had an overwhelming consensus that practical experience and one's efforts are pivotal to the successful transition into a leadership role.

5.4.2 Results of research question 2

What are the challenges that black South African females face when transitioning from self-leadership to leading others?

The interview questions posed to the research participants asked them to describe the challenges they faced when transitioning to a role that required leading others.

The questions aimed to solicit responses from the participants to identify the key challenges they faced during their transition into a leadership role. As a result, the challenges identified were quite diverse. The below table illustrates the six themes derived from the 23 codes identified.

Table 9: Challenges faced during the transition to leader

No.	Theme	Number of mentions	Interview reference
1	People management	15	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,15,16
2	Self-management	9	1,2,5,6,8,10,11,13,15
3	Organisational culture	9	1,2,3,4,9,10,12,13,14
4	Inequality	6	1,4,5,12,13,14
5	Navigating changing workplace dynamics	6	1,2,3,8,9,16
6	Acceptance of new role by colleagues	4	2, 12,14,15

The most mentioned challenge black South African females faced was navigating various people and team dynamics and developing their own people management skills. There were several elements within people management that the research participants mentioned.

These **people management** challenges included 1) building trust with one's team, 2) having to delegate responsibilities to team members, 3) adjusting one's mindset to the new role and responsibilities, 4) having to understand different personalities within a team, 5) managing conflict within a team, 6) having to empower those in one's team, 7) having to hold others accountable, 8) managing the age disparity within the team and 9) finding and adopting the correct leadership style.

The following quotes from the interviews relate to people management:

"Not being assertive comes across as not being confident" – Interview 1

"The biggest challenge that I had was trust, trusting those that I lead" –

Interview 1

“You, as a leader, need to create a safe environment, a psychologically safe environment. In order to do that you need to understand different individuals. You need to understand what type of communication works best for them to understand” – Interview 3

“Learning to manage people was very hard. It is not a skill that you have coming from a technical environment, you have to learn sort of on the go.” – Interview 6

“When people always say you don't leave the company, you leave the manager. It's because the managers are not given the necessary skills, tools and techniques to be able to navigate the management of people. This is what I had to understand when I transitioned to a leader.” – Interview 7

The research participants mentioned that challenges relating to **self-management**. The elements of self-management were diverse. They included challenges such as 1) taking responsibility for one's behaviour as a leader of others, 2) taking responsibility for one's well-being, 3) being encouraging to those that one leads, 4) understanding that one cannot perform the new role on one's own as it requires the collaboration of a team, and 5) understanding that leadership is not only about intelligence quotient (IQ) but includes developing one's emotional intelligence.

The following quotes from the interviews relate to self-management:

*“It took a considerable time for me to adjust to the leadership role”
– Interview 2*

“Being a leader is not all about IQ, it's more about EQ” – Interview 4

“I had to shift my focus from leading myself, to leading others” – Interview 8

“I had to learn to enable and empower those that I lead” – Interview 9

On several occasions, the research participants mentioned challenges with the **organisational culture** when they transitioned into a leadership role. These organisational culture challenges included elements such as 1) working in a male-dominated environment, 2) navigating a patriarchal environment (“boys club”), 3) an environment that did not feel psychologically safe to make decisions without fear of repercussion, 4) always being second-guessed by your peers as a black female leader, 5) male counterparts within the organisation having a lack of confidence in black female leaders, 6) a lack of recognition by your peers as a black female and 7) invisible barriers (a “glass ceiling”) limiting career growth.

The following quotes from the interviews relate to **organisational culture**:

“One of the main challenges that I faced was, I don’t know how to explain it, but it was a patriarchal environment, or rather a boy’s club. You felt the need to assert yourself or act in a certain way. You could go into a meeting and be two females in a room full of male managers.” – Interview 1

“Coming into an organisation as a black female you are seen as a threat” – Interview 4

“You are almost presumed incompetent and incapable until you prove yourself otherwise. I would say for that was the greatest challenge” – Interview 12

The research findings included elements of **inequality** being a challenge for certain research participants. The inequality included gender inequality, racism, a lack of recognition and unequal treatment compared to male counterparts.

The following quotes from the interviews relate to inequality:

“In an industry like law, you have to work harder, you have to prove yourself more, you have to be assertive, because you get undermined as a female” – Interview 4

“Especially if you are in a very male dominated work environment, it’s quite a

bit challenging in terms of acceptance as the female leader. It takes a bit of time to be accepted and one needs to do a lot of work to gain that acceptance
– Interview 10

“And I’ll say this, the racial element was also there. It was not blatant, but there was a sort of lack of confidence in black females” – Interview 11

“Especially this male-dominated industry that I’m in. So yes, it’s almost like you need to prove yourself, you need to do double what a male counterpart would do.” – Interview 14

The research participants mentioned several elements of **navigating specific workplace dynamics** as they transitioned into a leadership role. This included elements such as 1) being inauthentic and overly assertive to be respected, 2) not displaying one’s natural personality, 3) feeling the need to conform due to pressure, 4) being responsible for conflict management and 5) moving from a technical to a leadership role.

The following quotes from the interviews relate to navigating changing workplace dynamics:

“It was important to manage group dynamics. And I’ll give you an example, one of the people that I was managing, he had been in the organisation for more than 15 years. And he had automatically assumed that when the leadership position became available, he will get it and I was there for a year, and I got it.” – Interview 1

“When I transitioned to leader, I had to learn to be more assertive because I couldn’t assert myself and I came across as if I was not confident” – Interview 1

“As you transition to a leader position, you have to re-establish relationship with colleagues” – Interview 2

The research revealed that as one transitions into a leadership role, there is a lack

of acceptance of one's new role by one's colleagues. The following quotes from the interviews relate to the lack of acceptance of the new role by colleagues:

“And also for my peers to accept and to see me as the supervisor, top manager, or leader, and, you know, some grappled with it, to the extent that, despite my greatest efforts, you know, the friendships that were damaged, just by virtue of, you know, transitioning upon them as they saw it. So, so yes, so that that was the greatest challenge.” – Interview 2

*“There was a lack of acceptance of me as a female leader. It takes a bit of time to be accepted and one needs to do a lot of work to gain that acceptance”
– Interview 10*

5.4.3 Results of research question 3

What role does an organisation play in transitioning black South African females from self-leadership to leading others?

The research revealed that as one transitions into a leadership role, an organisation's role is vital. To understand the role that organisations play in the transition of a leader, the researcher posed questions to the interviewees about the opportunities provided to the researchers by the organisation to determine which inputs were most influential to the transition.

The data collection revealed that seven research participants received formal training and 10 received informal training. Thus, the number of participants who received formal training was relatively low. This correlates to the low ranking received for this factor as described in section 5.4.1. The below graph depicts the split of the number of research participants who received formal versus informal training and development. The results show that there were 3 (18,75%) more participants who received informal training.

Figure 8: Formal versus informal training

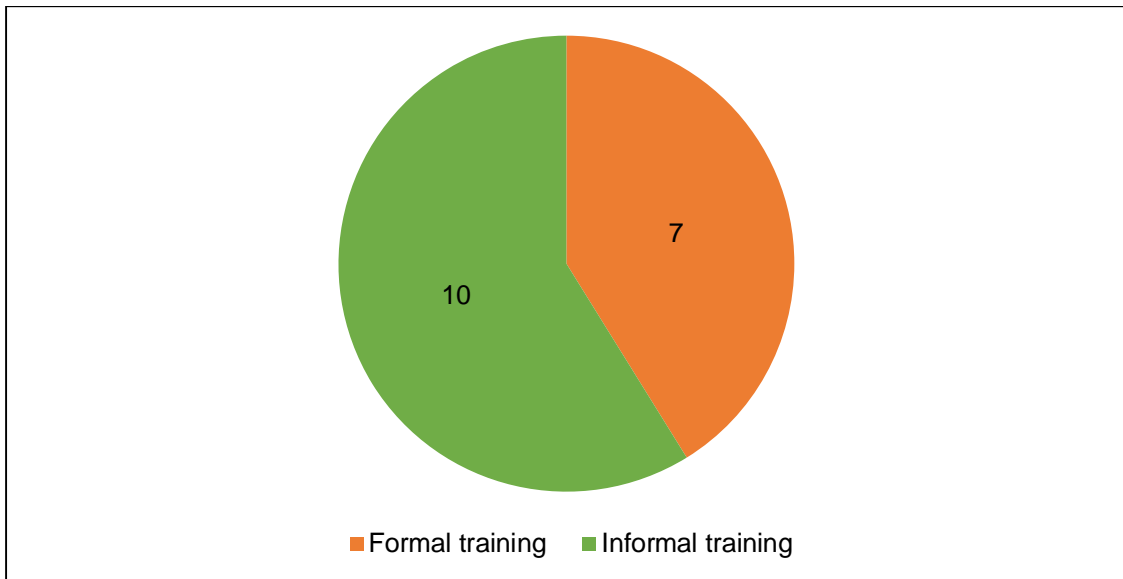


Table 10 describes the types of **formal and informal training** received by the research participants. The highest overall number of mentions was that 5 out of 16 participants had received leadership development training externally and internally. There were also notable mentions for support from line managers, informal mentorship and being included as part of a formal leadership pipeline programme.

Table 10: Types of formal and informal training and development

Type of training	Formal or informal	Number of mentions	Interview reference
Leadership development training (External)	Formal	5	2,4,6,9,10
Leadership development training (Internal)	Formal	5	2,9,10,12,14
Support from line manager	Informal	3	2,12,16
Mentorship (informal)	Informal	2	12,15
Internal guidance from colleagues	Informal	2	4,13
Included in a leadership pipeline programme	Formal	1	10

The table above shows that organisations could have incorporated more leadership development training to support the participants' transition into a leadership role. The

research participants mentioned that leadership training provides one with a sense of confidence when making decisions. Both formal and informal training is beneficial to the transition into a leadership role; however, there were mentions from the research participants that the training was either a) not provided at the correct time, b) not provided at all, or c) non-leadership specific training was provided, or d) an inadequate level of leadership training was provided.

The following quotes from the interviews relate to formal and informal training and development:

“[Training] provides you with the leadership capabilities to traverse along the leadership journey” – Interview 2

“Formal learning opens your mind” – Interview 5

*“You know, what, not to the extent which I had hoped to receive”
– Interview 7*

“Yes, [I received training] but it was not immediate” – Interview 11

“As a leader you need leadership training” – Interview 12

“I think they could have done more; they could have done more in terms of formal training. Technical skills are so important. But in general, as a leader, you do need leadership training.” – Interview 12

*“There isn't really handholding, you just get thrown into the deep end” –
Interview 13*

“The training was too technical and not focused on leadership” – Interview 15

The research participants described **learning through experiences** (experiential learning) and being emersed in the leadership role as the most beneficial factor for the transition into a leadership role. The below table shows overwhelming support for learning through experience. Every participant agreed that learning through

experience supported their transition into a leadership role.

Table 11: Participants who support learning through experience

Agree	Disagree
16	0

The following quotes from the interviews relate to learning through experiences:

"The more I practiced, the more decisions I made and activities that I did, the more confident I became as a leader" – Interview 1

"But you also make mistakes. And I think the learning comes from, in any case, the mistakes that you make, so the more experiences you have, the better you are equipped to deal with the situation in a different manner." Interview 9

"I draw from that experience, and I'll build some sort of intuition around making decisions based on that, based on that experience. Yes as you learn through experiences, you're able to tap into those, you know, previous experiences to address a problem or challenge that you're facing" – Interview 14

"You can't buy experience" – Interview 16

The research findings reveal that 13 of the 16 (81,25%) research participants believed their organisation could have done more to support them in transitioning to a leadership role. The below table shows the proportion of research participants who agreed that their organisation could have provided more support.

Table 12: Could the organisation have done more to support the transition?

Yes	No
13	3

Based on the interviews, there were 22 codes provided from the research participants as recommendations, or interventions, that organisations could consider in supporting employees transitioning from self-leadership to leading others. From

the 21 codes, five themes emerged.

Table 13: Recommendations for organisational support factors

No.	Theme	Number of mentions	Interview reference
1	A culture of enablement, diversity, equality, and support	10	1,2,3,4,5,6,8,10,15,16
2	Leadership training initiatives	8	2,4,6,9,10,11,12,13
3	Having a formal structured leadership programme in place	2	8,9
4	Creating a talent pipeline	1	6
5	Promoting mentorship and coaching	1	8

Based on the research findings on the organisational input that an organisation could implement, the culture of enablement, diversity and support had the highest number of mentions of 10, followed by leadership training initiatives with eight mentions.

The **culture of enablement, diversity and support** included the following factors; 1) an organisation should encourage an environment of learning, 2) to be more supportive and tolerant of individuals making mistakes, 3) promoting diversity and equality within the organisation in gender, race and management styles, 4) having less of an inclination to employ people from outside of the organisation into leadership roles, 5) creating a psychologically safe environment where females feel comfortable making decisions without the fear or threat of serious repercussion, 6) creating an enabling culture, creating a culture that is more deliberate about developing employees into leaders, 7) having a more substantial interest in employee personal development and 8) creating opportunities for employees to advance into more leadership roles.

The following quotes from the interviews relate to organisational support:

“Organisations must understand that once you transition into a leadership role, navigating up the leadership ladder is challenging” – Interview 2

“The lack of appropriate structure in place to really mobilize you into an

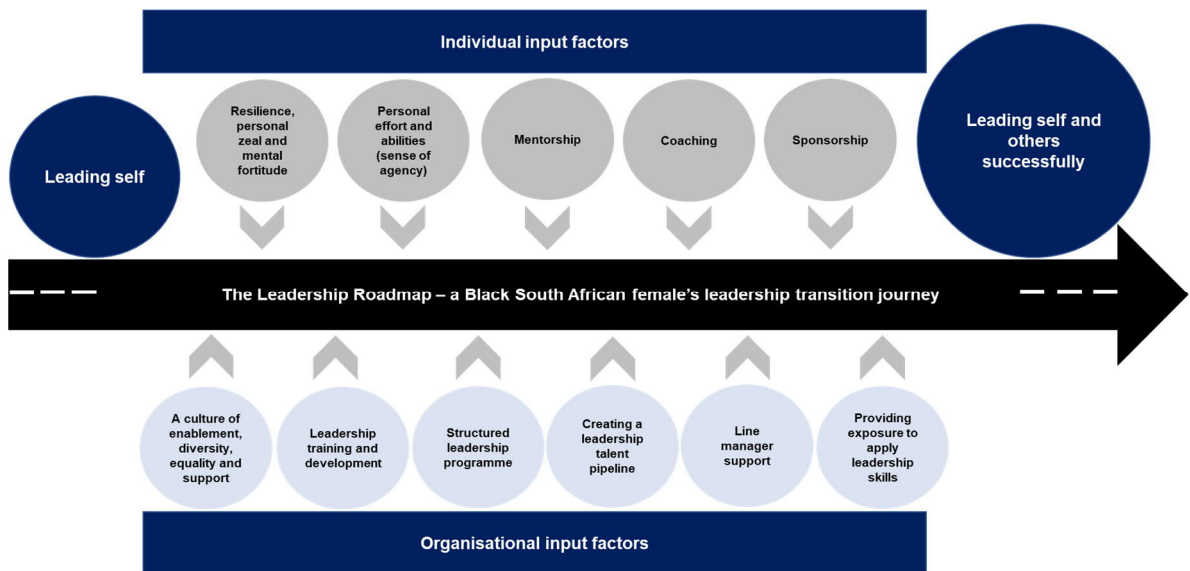
executive leadership position was seriously lacking” – Interview 2

“So in a way, having a tailor made program that is going to assist me in the gaps that I have. That's one and then, and also I don't know, shall I say coaches or some sort of mentorship, especially during that transition phase” – Interview 8

“Yes, they could have, because there was absolutely no formal structure in place to develop managers” – Interview 14

The model below provides a view of the various factors from an individual and organisational perspective as a leadership roadmap or framework based on the research findings. This model incorporates the various factors that influence the successful transition from self-leadership to leading others from the perspective of black South African females. This model can be utilised by organisations and individuals as a framework when traversing the leadership transition journey.

Figure 9: The Black South African Females Leadership Transition Model



Source: Author's own

5.5 Conclusion of findings

This chapter presented the results of the data collection, specifically the findings of the three research questions. In addition, the themes which emerged from the semi-structured interviews of the research participants were presented.

The research results described the factors that support the successful transition from self-leadership to leading others from the perspective of black South African females and the challenges that the research participants face as they transition into a leadership role. The results also provided insights into the factors supporting the successful transition from an individual and organisational perspective.

The findings included in Chapter 5 encompassed a leadership transition model illustrated in figure 9. This model is further discussed in Chapter 6 relative to the literature review in Chapter 2. The above results have been integrated into a model that illustrates that the factors required for black South African females to successfully transition into a leadership role are interconnected and need to work together to succeed.

Chapter 6: Discussion of Results

6.1 Introduction

The results of each research question in Chapter 5 are discussed in this chapter relative to the literature review in Chapter 2. The discussion of the results will provide insights aligned to the research purpose, which was to garner a greater understanding of the factors that influence the successful transition of black South African females from self-leadership to the leadership of others. Individuals and organisations can use the findings of this study to create an integrated leadership transition framework for black South African female leaders.

6.2 Discussion of results: Research question 1

What factors support the transition from self-leadership to leading others within the context of black South African females?

This research question aimed to understand the factors which the research participants believed assisted them in their transition from self-leadership to the leadership of others. The results for this research question are presented in section 5.4.1. The research results provide insights into the various factors that impacted the transition to a leadership role. Moreover, through data analysis, there were deeper insights gained into the highest to least impactful factors from the perspective of the research participants.

The frequency of the factors mentioned by the research participants was presented in section 5.4.1. Nine themes emerged from the coding and frequency analysis. First, the results show that the factors required for the successful transition combine individual and organisation contributions in an integrative manner. The factors presented in table 8 shows three tiers of importance based on the frequency of mentions. The top tier, with 15 and 14 mentions, included 1) exposure to opportunities to apply leadership skills (experiential learning) and 2) personal effort and abilities.

The literature revealed that skills, practical experience, time application, and work values (Charan et al., 2010) are essential when traversing the leadership pipeline. Furthermore, the results showed that research participants ranked their personal

efforts highly, including dedication, initiative, personal zeal, and the desire to upskill oneself as factors that assisted the leadership transition. In addition, the literature reveals a shift in attitude, the need to delegate, the ability to communicate clearly, and to provide supervision as factors required by the individual to transition into a leadership position successfully. Finally, the literature revealed that an individual's sense of agency is required for professional development (Strahan, 2016). The results of the research are therefore in support of the literature.

The literature revealed that adult learning is primarily achieved through application and real-world experiences. Further, the research results showed that exposure to opportunities to advance oneself as a leader is ranked in the top tier of influential factors to transition into a leadership role successfully. As such, the results are in support of the literature.

The middle tier factors are 1) mentorship, 2) company culture which acknowledges diversity and inclusion and 3) training and development. The specific responses from the research participants related to these factors specified three factors, namely, 1) access to a mentor is essential to leadership development, 2) having an organisational culture that promotes diversity, equality and inclusion, and 3) access to suitable leadership training and development initiatives.

The literature reveals that training and development is a factor that supports the transition (Manuti et al., 2015). The importance of the role of an organisation is supported by the literature (D'Netto et al., 2008; Kolb & Kolb, 2017, Perrault, 2014). Mentorship and guidance enhance the career advancement of mentees (Maloney, 2012). Mentorship has a significant impact on the career advancement of women in South Africa (Mcilongo, Strydom & Kariena, 2021). The results are in support of the literature.

The bottom tier factors are coaching, line manager support, internal support and guidance and robust leadership structures and talent pipeline. The role and importance of coaching were indicated as a factor that supported the research participants' transition. Again, this supports the literature (Chengadu & Scheepers, 2017; Maloney, 2012; Turesky & Gallagher, 2011).

The research participants indicated that line manager support was a factor that supported the transition to a leadership role. This supports the literature (Tuesky & Gallagher, 2011; D'Netto et al., 2008; Maloney, 2012). In addition, the research participants mentioned internal guidance and support from colleagues and senior management as factors that supported the transition to a leadership role. This supports the literature (Parl & Choi, 2016; Wörnich et al., 2015). Finally, the research participants mentioned that having a structured leadership pipeline in place is a factor that supports the transition to a leadership role. This supports the literature (Charan et al., 2010; Griffith et al., 2019).

As part of the data collection, the research participants were required to rank pre-determined factors, on an independent basis, based on the level of positive influence that the factor had on their transition to a leadership role. The ranking results were presented in Table 10, illustrating the pre-determined factors from highest to lowest impact. The order of ranking was 1) own personal efforts, 2) opportunity to apply leadership skills, 3) mentorship or guidance, 4) informal training and development, 5) support from one's line manager, and 6) finally formal training and development.

The results from the ranking contribute to the current literature as it provides insight into which factors were perceived as most influential to the research participants. This ranking could also provide career development role-players (individuals and organisations specifically) with an indication of which factors to prioritise for the transition from self-leadership to the leadership of others.

The lowest ranking factor being formal training and development may have been impacted by certain research participants not receiving formal training (7 of the 16 participants). As such, the low ranking of this factor does not accurately represent its impact on leadership transition. The results related to research question 3 will provide additional support to this finding.

6.3 Discussion of results: Research question 2

What are the challenges that black South African females face when transitioning from self-leadership to leading others?

The aim of research question 2 was to understand the challenges that black South

African females are faced with when transitioning from self-leadership to leading others. The challenges that have been identified will provide insights into the challenges that impede the successful transition to a leadership role. The results for research question 2 were presented in section 5.4.2. The analysis of the data collected during the interviews indicates several challenges pertinent to the research participants. The analysis also provides insights into the most frequently experienced challenges by black South African females transitioning into a leadership role.

The challenge mentioned most frequently by the research participants was the need to manage people and develop one's people management skills as one transitions into a leadership role. In addition, the research participants mentioned challenges such as a) understanding the various dynamics within the team, b) developing one's people management skills, c) building trust with their team, d) delegating effectively, e) managing conflict, and f) empowering those in one's team.

15 of the 16 research participants indicated that navigating people dynamics was the most challenging aspect of transitioning into a leader. The literature revealed that an individual would be required to gain new competencies and skills when transitioning into a leader of others as a new set of skills would be required to collaborate in a team environment effectively (Charan et al., 2010; Freedman, 2011). The leadership pipeline model also specifies that as one becomes a leader of others, there is a shift in the necessary skills required to lead effectively (Freedman, 2011).

The second-highest ranked challenge that the research participants faced were self-management. The research participants mentioned specific self-management challenges such as 1) taking responsibility for one's behaviour as a leader of others, 2) taking responsibility for one's well-being, 3) being encouraging to those that one lead, 4) understanding that one cannot perform the new role on one's own as it requires the collaboration of a team, and 5) understanding that leadership is not only about one's intelligence quotient but includes developing one's emotional intelligence.

The participants mentioned that transitioning from a functional role to a leadership role required a concerted shift in mindset. The literature revealed that the challenge of transitioning from self-leadership to leading others requires an adjustment in work

skills, time application and work values (Charan et al., 2010). The results presented are in support of the literature.

The third and fourth highest ranked challenge which the research participants mentioned was organisational culture and inequality. These organisational cultural challenges included elements such as 1) working in a male-dominated environment, 2) navigating a patriarchal environment (“boys club”), 3) working in an environment that did not feel psychologically safe to make decisions without fear of repercussion, 4) always being second-guessed by your peers as a black female leader, 5) male counterparts within the organisation having a lack of confidence black female leaders, 6) a lack of recognition by your peers as a black female and 7) invisible barriers being in place limiting career growth.

The research findings included elements of inequality being a challenge for certain research participants that they had to face. The inequality included gender inequality, racism, a lack of recognition and unequal treatment compared to male counterparts. The literature reveals that an organisational culture incorporates elements of the behaviour, attitudes and practices within an organisation (D’Netto, 2008). An organisational culture that supports employee learning and development will thrive and achieve their desired strategy.

The literature further reveals that there are several barriers to leadership development for women. These barriers include gender discrimination and inequality, the old boys’ network, and the glass ceiling effect (Chang & Milkman, 2019; Chengadu & Scheepers, 2017; Heilman, 2012; Jaga et al., 2017; Koch et al., 2015; Nekhili & Gatfaoui, 2013;). The results of the research are in support of the literature.

6.4 Discussion of results: Research question 3

What role does an organisation play in transitioning black South African females from self-leadership to leading others?

This research question aimed to understand the role of the organisation in the transition of Black South African females from self-leadership to the leadership of others. The results for this research question are presented in section 5.4.3. The

research results provide insights into the various organisational inputs and factors that impacted the leadership transition. Moreover, through data analysis, there were deeper insights gained into the most to least impactful factors from the perspective of the research participants.

The highest-ranked factor was an organisation having a culture of enablement, diversity, equality and support. The culture of enablement, diversity and support included the following elements such as; 1) an organisation should encourage an environment of learning, 2) to be more supportive and tolerant of individuals making mistakes, 3) promoting diversity and equality within the organisation in gender, race and management styles, 4) having less of an inclination to employ people from outside of the organisation into leadership roles, 5) creating a psychologically safe environment where females feel comfortable with making decisions without the fear or threat of serious repercussions, 6) creating an enabling culture, 7) creating a culture that is more deliberate about developing employees into leaders, 8) having a more substantial interest in employee personal development and 9) creating opportunities for employees to advance into more leadership roles.

The literature revealed that the role of an organisation is pivotal to an individual's career development. Therefore, it is important to align employee development to the organisational objectives. An environment that encourages skills development and employment growth will improve organisation success (Turgut & Neuhaus, 2020). The implementation of formal training initiatives for employees is essential for employee growth. This could include formal training delivered by external institutions or on-the-job training (Wärnich et al., 2015). The research finding is in support of the literature.

The second highest factor that organisations could implement is learning and development initiatives. The research findings revealed that a significant proportion of the research participants believed that organisations could have incorporated more leadership development training to support the participants' transition into a leadership role. In addition, the research participants mentioned that leadership training provides one with a sense of confidence when making decisions.

Both formal and informal training is beneficial to the transition into a leadership role;

however, there were mentions from the research participants that the training was 1) not provided at the correct time, 2) not provided at all, 3) no leadership specific training was provided, or 4) an inadequate level of leadership training provided.

The literature reveals that the training and development of employees is an essential component of overall organisational success. Training and development initiatives improve employee behaviours, knowledge, and overall skills, enabling employees to perform more effectively, thus executing the organisational strategy (Wärnich et al., 2015). The implementation of formal training initiatives for employees is essential for employee growth. The ability to learn through experiences and on-the-job training is a crucial component in developing leadership skills (Thomas, 2008). The need for a combined and integrated approach to learning through formal learning programmes and learning directly from others demonstrates enhanced efficacy (Becker & Bish, 2017).

The research supports the literature; however, the extent and adequacy of the research participants' training were insufficient. This highlights that training is beneficial and recognised by the participants as supportive of the leadership transition; however, the support from the organisation in this regard is insufficient and lacking.

This could indicate that organisations place a low value on learning and development. However, a culture of learning plays a vital role in promoting an enabling culture. Based on the results, some organisations need to invest time and resources to create a learning and development culture.

6.5 Conclusion

The discussion of the research results supports the literature review in Chapter 2. The results support that the successful transition requires input from an individual and organisational level (Becker & Bish, 2017; Turgut & Neuhaus, 2020). The results highlight that the role of an organisation is pivotal to the success of the transition as several factors influence the transition. The results highlight two key factors: creating an organisational culture of enablement, diversity and equality, and implementing robust leadership training initiatives.

The results highlight that two stand-out factors contribute to a black South African female's successful transition to leadership. These two factors are 1) being provided with the opportunities to apply leadership skills and 2) personal effort needed by an individual to traverse the leadership transition journey.

Exposure to opportunities to be a leader and apply one's leadership skills is the most influential factor needed to transition into a successful leader. The results highlight that adult learning is primarily driven through experiences. Therefore, the results support the literature (Becker & Bish, 2017; Kolb & Kolb, 2017)).

The second most important and influential factor is an individual's sense of agency to drive the successful transition. An individual's personal effort, which includes elements such as dedication, resilience, personal zeal, and a strong desire to succeed, significantly contributes to the successful transition to a leadership role. This supports the literature, which reveals that the transition would be adversely impacted without this personal effort in place.

There were several challenges highlighted in the research results. The most common challenge was people management and developing people management skills. The data analysis revealed that navigating people dynamics was the most significant challenge experienced by the research participants. The data further revealed that the development of people management skills required a human-centred focus and approach. This focus includes the development of leadership skills which are more important than conceptual or technical skills.

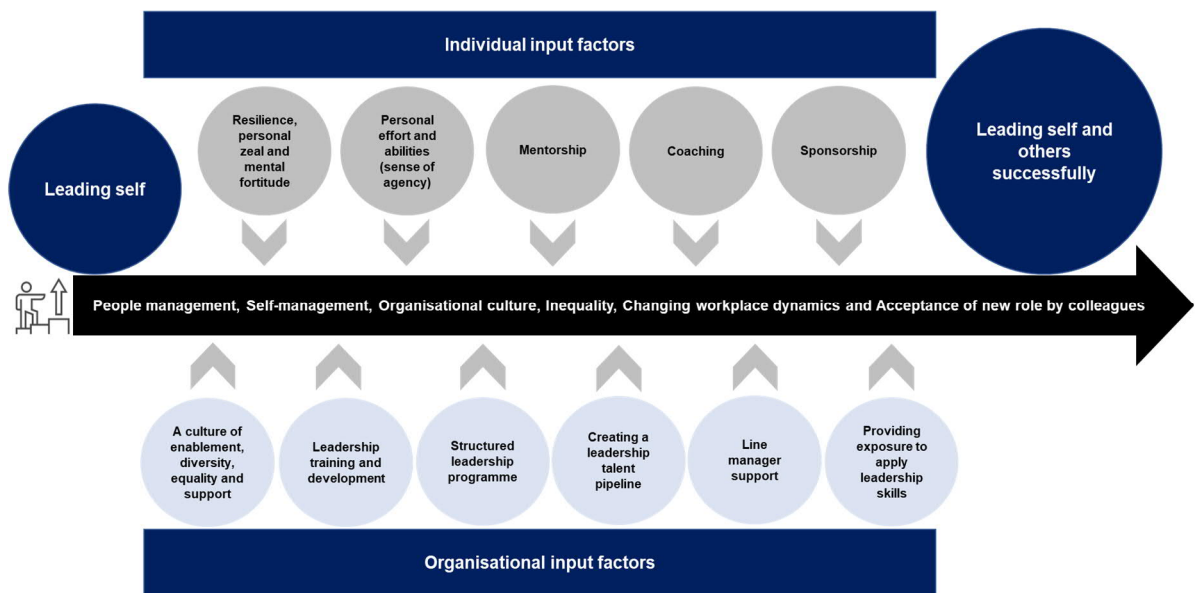
The model in figure 10 below is an adaptation of the model presented in Chapter 5, figure 9. This model reflects the roadmap of a black South African female's journey from self-leadership to leading others. The model starts at the self-leadership point where an individual is primarily responsible for leading themselves.

The leadership journey then begins and becomes thwarted with challenges that the individual will face along this journey. These challenges are shown in the primary horizontal arrow. These six challenges create additional complexity as the individual navigates the transition. These challenges include specific complexities that black South African females need to consider and manage during this transition.

As the individual traverses along this leadership journey, input factors from both the individual and organisation will support the individual on this journey. These inputs influence the successful transition from self-leadership. For example, this model can be utilised by black South African females who are transitioning from self-leadership. These individuals could utilise this model to identify the challenges they potentially already face or will face in the future. In addition, the individual can use the model to identify gaps in their input factors.

Additionally, organisations can use the model to comprehend better the critical role they play in the leadership journey of individuals in their employ. Finally, the model allows organisations to understand how they can positively contribute to the successful transition by implementing various input factors.

Figure 10: The Leadership Transition Model for Black South African Females



Source: Author's own

Chapter 7: Conclusion and Recommendations

7.1 Introduction

This chapter will present a summary of the principal findings of this research. It will further include recommendations and implications for stakeholders to consider. Finally, this chapter will delineate the limitations of the research and provide recommendations for future research.

7.2 Principal conclusions

7.2.1 Key challenges faced during the transition to leader

Based on the research findings, the most prevalent challenges faced by black South African females when transitioning from self-leadership to leading others are people management, self-management, organisational culture, inequality, navigating changing workplace dynamics, and acceptance of the new role by colleagues.

7.2.2 Key factors influencing leadership transition

The research results identified factors that influence the successful transition from self-leadership to leading others from an individual and organisational standpoint. The factors were 1) providing exposure to opportunities to apply leadership skills (experiential learning), 2) personal effort and abilities, 3) mentorship, 4) sponsorship, 5) company culture which acknowledges diversity and inclusion, 6) training and development, 7) coaching, 8) line manager support, 9) internal support and guidance and 10) robust leadership structures and 11) talent pipeline.

7.2.3 Organisational level challenges

The organisation must also consider addressing challenges such as 1) people management, 2) self-management, 3) organisational culture, 4) inequality, 5) navigating changing workplace dynamics, and 6) the acceptance of a new leadership role by colleagues.

The results presented in chapter 6 provides insights that black women thrive in leadership roles when they are provided with the opportunity to learn and apply leadership skills. The transition into a leadership role becomes easier when there is a structured leadership plan in place. The appointment of black females to meet

employment equity targets is not enough to drive black women career advancement.

There needs to be a structured leadership plan in place, which includes a combination of the organisational inputs mentioned in section 6.4. The combination of formal and informal training is the best form of leadership training as the results indicate that both forms of training are required to promote leadership development. The experiential learning element is pivotal for the transition as adult learning and development happens best through lived experiences.

7.2.4 Risk of not implementing individual input factors

There is a risk that if these individual input factors are not implemented, the transition to a leadership role may not be successful. For example, the research results indicated that participants felt that without the necessary input factors being in place, they may not have successfully transitioned into a leader, or it may have taken longer to transition successfully. To mitigate this risk, it is recommended that the individual and organisation considers the recommendations described in section 7.3, specifically the individual and organisation implementation plans.

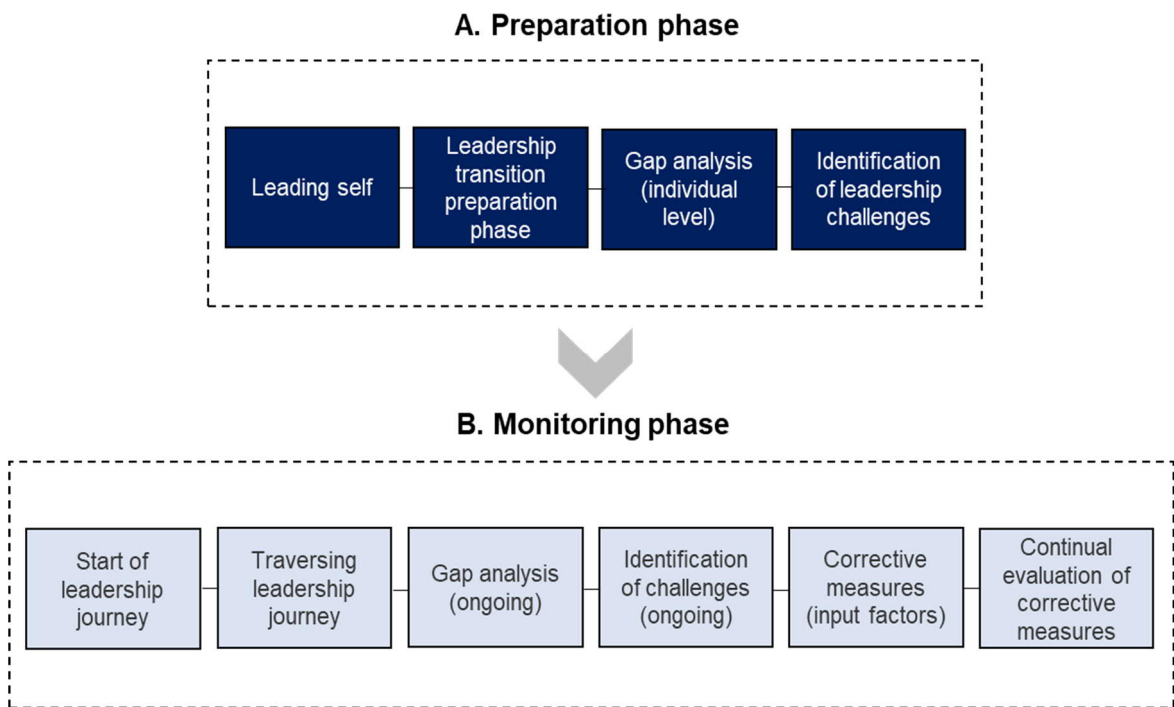
7.3 Implications for relevant stakeholders

7.3.1 Recommendations for black South African females

The research results provided recommendations for individuals who will transition into a leadership role and those who are currently in the process of this transition. The model in figure 9 provides the relevant individual input factors needed to transition into leadership successfully. The first recommendation is for individuals to understand that resilience, personal zeal and mental fortitude is required to traverse this transition as it has several challenges and complexities which need to be carefully managed.

The second recommendation is to develop a sense of agency related to the personal attributes required to transition to a leadership position successfully. The third recommendation is seeking mentorship both internally and externally. The fourth recommendation is coaching to support the individual during the transition. Finally, the last recommendation is finding a suitable sponsor to drive and influence progression within an organisation.

Figure 11: Individual implementation plan (Author's own)



Source: Author's own

Figure 11 depicts a two-phased leadership transition journey implementation plan. The first phase is the preparation phase aimed at those individuals transitioning into a leadership role. The second phase is the monitoring phase aimed at individuals who are already in the transition phase and those who have completed the preparation phase and intend to move into phase 2. It is recommended that those individuals in the transition phase evaluate their current leadership transition journey by considering the steps within phase B. This evaluation will allow the individuals to assess their current leadership transition journey, identify gaps, and implement the necessary corrective measures.

As an individual transitions into a leadership role, it is recommended to perform a gap analysis to evaluate which individual input factors are lacking or need further development. This evaluation could be performed before or during the transition. Where gaps are identified, the individual can implement remedial steps to close these gaps. This could be an introspective evaluation of one's personal effort to ensure that the requisite sense of agency needed is being applied. This gap analysis could

include seeking out a suitable mentor, coach, or sponsor. The model presented in figure 9 also explains the various challenges that individuals will face as they transition into a leadership role.

By understanding the various challenges, the individual is recommended to plan and implement the necessary actions to counter these various challenges. It is further recommended that the individual considers the leadership transition model from a short term and long-term perspective. The individual should consider the short-term interventions or inputs that could be implemented as the transition journey begins. These short-term interventions should be considered preparatory to ensure that the individual adequately prepares for the leadership transition journey.

The model also allows for a proactive approach to leadership development. The model can be used by an individual that aspires to be a leader. An individual seeking to become a leader can consider the preparation phase of the above implementation plan. It allows the aspiring leader to proactively implement the necessary input factors, thus positioning themselves more favourably for a promotion to a leadership role in an organisation.

7.3.2 Recommendations for organisations

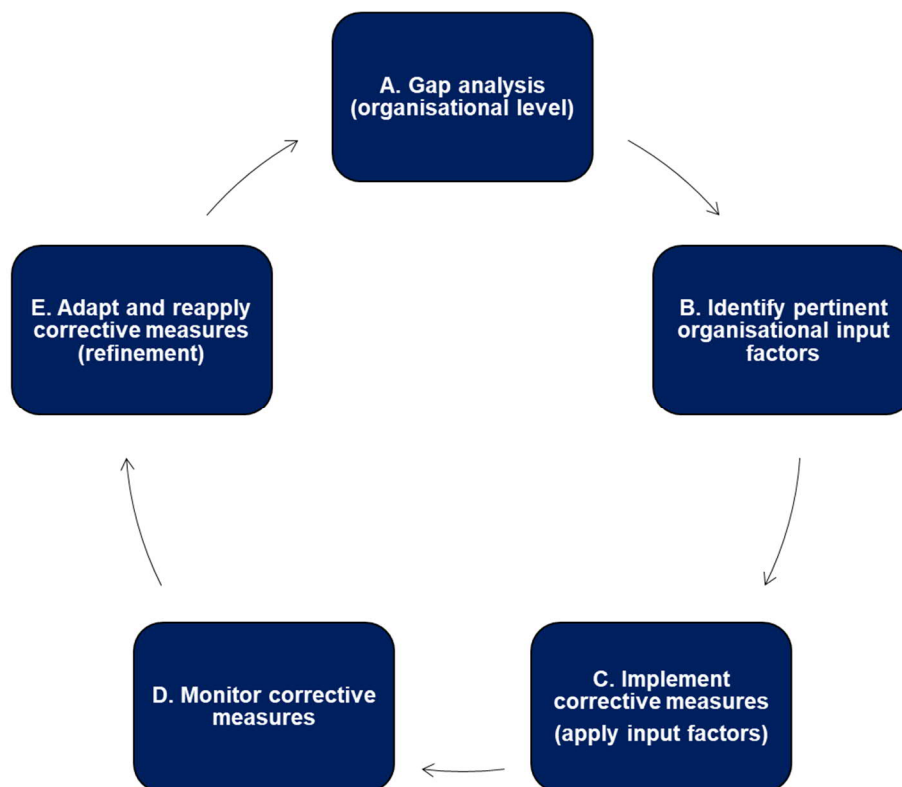
Based on the results, an organisation has a significant role in supporting the transition of black South African females into a leadership role. There are six recommendations for organisations to consider. Firstly, an organisation can cultivate a culture of enablement, diversity, equality and support. The second recommendation is providing leadership training and development initiatives to support the personal development of individuals. This leadership training needs to be relevant and provided at the optimal time for the individual.

The third recommendation is to include identified employees in a structured leadership programme. The fourth recommendation is for an organisation to create a leadership talent pipeline. The fifth recommendation is for line managers to provide the necessary on-the-job support and guidance. Finally, the last recommendation is for an organisation to provide opportunities to the identified employees to apply leadership skills.

Figure 12 depicts an organisational implementation plan recommended by the author to use in leadership transition planning. The model begins with an organisation performing an organisational level gap analysis to identify which organisational input factors are not in place or inadequately implemented. The organisation then identifies which input factors they need to implement. Once the input factors are identified, the organisation implements the corrective measures. This is followed by monitoring the corrective measures to ensure that it is correctly applied and practical for the organisation to implement.

The next step is adaptation and reapplication of corrective measures to ensure that the measures are refined and appropriately applied. Once the refinement of the corrective measures is done, the entity will perform the gap analysis again. This circular process flow allows for constant refinement and ensures that the organisational implementation is relevant and applicable to the organisation given the constant changes in the business environment.

Figure 12: Organisational implementation plan



Source: Author's own

7.4 Limitations of the research

The research limitations relevant to this research should be considered when reviewing the results and findings of the research. Based on the purposive and homogenous sampling used, which is a relatively small sample, the results cannot be deemed a representation of the population, as such, no generalisations can be made for the population. In addition, the researcher's lack of experience in conducting interviews may have resulted in interview bias and observation error.

The virtual nature of the interviews due to the COVID-19 pandemic limitations of face-to-face interactions may have restricted the information shared by the research participants, resulting in less data being shared in the interview and thus less data collected and reduction in the overall quality of the information to be shared. In addition, the research participants were all based in the Gauteng, Johannesburg (South Africa) region at the time of the interviews, as such, the study results may be subjective to this specific region.

7.5 Suggestions for future research

The following are suggestions for future research:

- A quantitative study based on the factors that influence the successful transition from self-leadership to leading of others by predicting the variables of influential factors which can be tested to confirm the results of this research.
- The barriers to the development of women in leadership should be further analysed, in relation to black South African females, specifically the glass ceiling impact.
- A study could be done on the lack of access of suitable female mentors for black females in South Africa.
- A study could be done on how organisations could better implement leadership training initiatives to support black South African females and their progression on the leadership journey.
- A study could be conducted on how organisations could better implement leadership training to support black South African females to support their leadership progression journey.

8 References

- Ahmed Khan, Z., Nawaz, A., & Khan, I. (2016). *Leadership Theories and Styles: A Literature Review. Journal of Human Resources Development and Management*. 16.
- Antwi, S. K., & Hamza, K. (2015). Qualitative and Quantitative Research Paradigms in Business. *European Journal of Business and Management*, 219-222.
- Aragon, I. & Valle, S. (2013) Does training managers pay off?. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 24:8, 1671-1684, DOI: 10.1080/09585192.2012.725064
- Arghode, V., Brieger, E. W., & McLean, G. (2017). Adult Learning Theories: Implications for Online Instruction. *European Journal of Training and Development*. 41. 00-00. doi:10.1108/EJTD-02-2017-0014.
- Ayyala, M. S., Skarupski, K., Bodurtha, J. N., Gonzalez-Fernandez, M., Ishli, L. E., Fivush, B., & Levine, R. B. (2019). Mentorship is not enough: Exploring sponsorship and its role in career advancement in academic medicine. *Academic Medicine*, Jan 94(1): 94-100. doi: 10.1097/ACM.0000000000002398. PMID: 30095456.
- Bandara, A. (2015). The economic cost of gender gaps in effective labor: Africa's missing growth reserve. *Feminist Economics*, 162-186. doi:10.1080/13545701.2014.986153
- Becker, K., and Bish, A. (2017). Management development experiences and expectations: Information versus formal learning. *Education and Training*, 59(6).
- Bloomberg, L. D., & Volpe, M. (2012). *Completing your qualitative dissertation: A road map from beginning to end*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.
- Businesswomen's Association of South Africa (2017). *Women in leadership census*. Johannesburg: Brighton Wealth Subsaharan (Pty) Limited. Retrieved from: <https://bwasa.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/2017-BWASA-CENSUS-report.pdf>
- Chang, E. H., and Milkman, K. L. (2019). Improving decisions that affect gender equality in the workplace. *Organizational Dynamics*. doi:10.1016/j.orgdyn.2019.03.002
- Charan, R., Drotter, S. J., & Noel, J. L. (2001). *The leadership pipeline: How to build the leadership-powered company*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

- Chengadu, S., & Scheepers, C. (2017). *Women leadership in emerging markets: Featuring 46 women leaders*. Taylor & Francis
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2017). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. California: Sage.
- De Meuse, K.P., Dai, G., & Wu, J. (2011). Leadership skills across organizational levels: A closer examination. *The Psychologist-Manager Journal*, 14(2), 120–139. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10887156.2011.570143>
- Denscombe, M. (2014). *The good research guide: for small-scale social research projects*. England: McGraw-Hill Education.
- Derks, B., Van Laar, C., & Ellemers, N. (2016). The queen bee phenomenon: Why women leaders distance themselves from junior women. *The Leadership Quarterly* 27, 456-469. doi:10.1016/j.leaqua.2015.12.007.
- Drotter, S. (2010). Leadership pipeline. *Leadership Excellence*, 27(8), 11–12.
- D'Netto, B., Bakas, F., & Bordia, P. (2008). Predictors of management development effectiveness: An Australian perspective. *International Journal of Training and Development*, 12(1), 2–23. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2419.2007.00292.x>
- Fallahi, B., Mehrad, A., & Rahpaymaelizehee, S. (2015). The barriers of womens management in top positions regarding to job satisfaction. 5(5). *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences*.
- Fereday, J., and Muir-Cochrane, E. (2006). Demonstrating Rigor Using Thematic Analysis: A Hybrid Approach of Inductive and Deductive Coding and Theme Development. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 80-92.
- Fitzsimmons, S. R. (2012). Women on boards of directors: Why skirts in seats aren't enough. Peter B. *Gustavson School of Business Faculty Publications*, pp. 557-566. doi:10.1016/j.bushor.2012.07.003
- Freedman, A. M. (1998). Pathways and crossroads to institutional leadership. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research*, 50(3), 131–151. <https://doi.org/10.1037/1061-4087.50.3.131>
- Freedman, A.M. (2005). Swimming upstream: The challenge of managerial promotions. In R.B. Kaiser (Ed.), *Filling the leadership pipeline* (pp. 25–44). Greensboro, NC: Centre for Creative Leadership
- Freedman, A. M. (2011). Some implications of validation of the Leadership Pipeline

concept: Guidelines for assisting managers-in-transition. *The Psychologist-Manager Journal*, 14(2), 140–159.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10887156.2011.570146>

- Gibson, C., Hardy III, J., Baur, J., Frink, D., & Buckley, M. R. (2014). Expectation-based interventions for expatriates. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*. doi:10.1016/J.ijintrel.2015.06.001
- Given, L. M. (2008). *The Sage encyclopedia of qualitative research methods*. Los Angeles, Calif: Sage Publications.
- George, W. W., Sims, P., McLean, A. N., Mayer, D., & Mayer D. (2017). Discovering your Authentic Leadership. *Harvard Business Review*, February 1-10.
- Gouws, A. (2012). Reflections on being a feminist academic/academic feminism in South Africa. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal*, 31. 526-541. doi:10.1108/02610151211235505.
- Griffith, A., Baur, E., & Buckley, R. (2019). Creating comprehensive leadership pipelines: Applying the real options approach to organisational leadership development. *Human Resource Management Review*, 29(3), 305-315.
- Guest, G., Bunce, A., & Johnson, L. (2006). How Many Interviews Are Enough?: An Experiment with Data Saturation and Variability. *Field Methods*, 18(1), 59–82. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1525822X05279903>
- Haile, S., Emmanuel, T., & Dzathor, A. (2016). Barriers and challenges confronting women for leadership and management positions: Review and analysis. *International Journal of Business & Public Administration*, 13(1), 36-51.
- Heilman, M. E. (2012). Gender stereotypes and workplace bias. *Research in organizational behavior*, 113-135.10.1016/j.riob.2012.11.003.
- Hofmeyr, K., & Mzobe, C. (2012). Progress towards advancing women in South African organisations: Myth or reality. *African Journal of Business Management*, 6, 1276-1289.
- Jaga, A. & Arabandi, B., Bagraim, J., & Mdlongwa, S. (2017). *Doing the 'gender dance': Black women professionals negotiating gender, race, work and family in post-apartheid South Africa*. Community, Work & Family. 21. 1-16. 10.1080/13668803.2017.1311840.
- Jena, L. K., Pradhan, S., & Panigraphy, N. P. (2018). Pursuit of organisation trust: Role of employee engagement, psychological well-being and transformational leadership. *Asia Pacific Management Review*, 23(2018),

227-234.

- Koch, A. J., D'Mello, S. D., & Sackett, P. R. (2015). A meta-analysis of gender stereotypes and bias in experimental simulations of employment decision making. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 100(1), 128–161. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0036734>
- Kolb, Y., & Kolb, A. (2017). Experiential Learning Theory as a guide for experiential educators in higher education. *A Journal for Engaged Educators*. Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 7–44
- Kononiuk, A., & Pająk, A., & Gudanowska, A., & Magruk, A., & Rollnik-Sadowska, E & Kozłowska, J. (2020). Foresight for Career Development. *Foresight and STI Governance*. 14. 88-104. 10.17323/2500-2597.2020.2.88.104.
- Lub, V. (2015). Validity in qualitative evaluation: Linking Purposes, Paradigms and Perspectives. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 14. 10.1177/1609406915621406.
- Mallaby, S.J., Price, G., & Hofmeyr, K. (2017). The transition to general management in South Africa. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management/SA Tydskrif vir Menslikehulpbronbestuur*, 15(0), a846. <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajhrm.v15i0.846>
- Maloney, M. E. (2012). Ethical mentorship: The dilemma of success or failure. *Clinics in Dermatology*, 30, 210-215. doi:10.1016/j.clindermatol.2011.06.009
- Mcilongo, M. & Strydom, K. (2021). The significance of mentorship in supporting the career advancement of women in the public sector. *Heliyon*. 7. e07321. 10.1016/j.heliyon.2021.e07321.
- Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2016). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation (4th ed.)*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Milner, J., McCarthy, G. (2018). Training for the coaching leader: how organisations can support managers. *Journal of Management Development*, 37. 00-00. 10.1108/JMD-04-2017-0135.
- Nekhili, M., & Gatfaoui, H. (2013). Are demographic attributes and firm characteristics drivers of gender diversity? Investigating women's positions on French boards of directors. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 227-249. 118(2), 227–249. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-012-1576-z>
- Neuman, L. W. (2000). *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches (4th Ed.)*, USA: Allyn and Bacon.

- Ng, W., & Coakes, E. (2014). *Business research : enjoy creating, developing, and writing your business project*. Kogan Page.
- Ng, E., & Sears, G. (2012). CEO leadership styles and the implementation of organizational diversity practices: Moderating effects of social values and age. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 41-52.
- Osituyo, Dapo. (2018). Underrepresentation and Career Advancement of Women in the South African Public-Sector Setting. *International journal of women's studies*. Vol. 19. 171-186.
- Perrault, E. (2014). Why does board gender diversity matter and how do we get there? The role of shareholder activism in deinstitutionalizing old boys' networks. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 149-165. doi:10.1007/s10551-014-2092-0
- Pina e Cunha, M., Pacheco, M., Castanheira, F., & Rego, A. (2017). Reflexive work and the duality of self-leadership. *Leadership*, 13(4), 472–495. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1742715015606511>
- Rindfleisch, A., Malter, A., Ganesan, S & Moorman, C. (2008). Cross-Sectional Versus Longitudinal Survey Research. *Journal of Marketing Research - J market res-chicago*. 45. 261-279. 10.1509/jmkr.45.3.26.
- Ritchie, J., & Lewis, J. (2013). *Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students and researchers*. SAGE.
- Rowley, J. (2012). Conducting research interviews. *Management Research Review*. 35. 260-271. 10.1108/01409171211210154.
- Saunders, M., & Lewis, P. (2018). *Doing research in business & management*. Edinburgh Gate: Pearson Education.
- Seale, O., Fish, P., & Schreiber, B. (2021). Enabling and empowering women in leadership in South African universities – Assessing needs and designing a response. *Management in Education*, 35(3), 136–145. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0892020620981951>
- Sharif, M. Y. (2015). Glass ceiling, the prime driver of women entrepreneurship in Malaysia: A phenomenological study of women lawyers. *Social and Behavioral Sciences*. 169. 329-336. doi:10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.01.317
- Silverman, D. (2015). *Interpreting Qualitative Data*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

- Snowden D. J, Boone M. E. (2007). A leader's framework for decision making. *Harvard Business Review*. 85(11):68-76, 149. PMID: 18159787.
- Stewart, G. L., Courtright, S. H., & Manz, C. C. (2011). Self-Leadership: A Multilevel Review. *Journal of Management*, 37(1), 185–222.
- Strahan, D (2016). Mid-career teachers' perceptions of self-guided professional growth: strengthening a sense of agency through collaboration. *Teacher Development*, 20:5, 667-681, DOI: 10.1080/13664530.2016.1190782
- Subramony, M., Segers, J., Chadwick, C., & Shyamsunder, A. (2018). Leadership Development Practice Bundles and Organizational Performance: The Mediating Role of Human Capital and Social Capital. *Journal of Business Research*. 83. 10.1016/j.jbusres.2017.09.044.
- The Department of Trade and Industry. (2014). *Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment*. Retrieved from: <http://www.thedtic.gov.za/financial-and-non-financial-support/b-bbee/broad-based-black-economic-empowerment/>
- Thomas, R.J. (2008). Crucibles of leadership development. *MIT Sloan Management Review*, 49(3), 15–18.
- Travis, E. L., Doty, L., & Helitzer, D. L. (2013). Sponsorship: a path to the academic medicine C-suite for women faculty? *Academic Medicine*, 88(10), 1414-1417. doi:10.1097/ACM.0b013e3182a35456
- Turesky, E & Gallagher, D. (2011). Know thyself: Coaching for leadership using Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory. *Coaching Psychologist*. 7. 5-14.
- Turgut, S., & Neuhaus, E. (2020) The Relationship Between Dispositional Resistance to Change and Individual Career Management: A Matter of Occupational Self-Efficacy and Organizational Identification?, *Journal of Change Management*, 20:2, 171-188, DOI: 10.1080/14697017.2020.1720774
- Wärnich, S., Carrell, R., Elbert, F., & Hatfield, D. (2015). *Human resource management in South Africa* (5th ed.) Hampshire: Cengage Learning.
- Watkins, M.D. (2012). How managers become leaders. *Harvard Business Review*, 90(6), 64–72.
- Williams, P. (2017). Student agency for powerful learning. *Knowledge Quest*, 45(4), pg8-15
- Withisuphakorn, P., & Jiraporn, P. (2017). CEO age and CEO gender: Are female CEOs older than their male counterparts? *Finance Research Letters*, 22,

129-135. doi:10.1016/j.frl.2016.12.026

Woo, S. E., O'Boyle, E. H., & Spector, P. E. (2017). Best practices in developing, conducting, and evaluating inductive research. *Human Resource Management Review*, 27(2), 255–264.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2016.08.004>

Yammarino, F. J. (1999). CEO charismatic leadership: Levels-of-management and levels-of analysis effects. *Academy of Management Review*, 24, 266-286.

Yavorsky, J. E., Keister, L. A., Qian, Y., & Nau, M. (2019). Women in the one percent: Gender dynamics in top income positions. *American Sociological Review*, 84(1), 54-81. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122418820702>

Zhang, Y., & Wildemuth, B. M. (2015). *Qualitative Analysis of Content*. Retrieved from <http://old-classes.design4complexity.com/>

Zikmund, W., Babin, B., Carr, J., & Griffin, M. (2013). *Business research methods*. USA, South Western: Cengage Learning.

9 Appendices

Appendix 1: Interview Discussion Guide

Date:

Time of interview:

Thank for taking the time to engage with me today. Your input to this research is highly appreciated. The aim of the research is to develop a deeper understanding of the factors that influenced your transition from self-leadership to leading of others from the perspective of a black South African female. I would like to understand your personal experiences on this subject matter.

Thank you for sending your signed consent form, and I would like to request your permission to make a digital recording of this interview. Please note that all responses and insights provided today will be kept strictly confidential and your name will not be mentioned.

Question 1:

Kindly provide your current employment details namely job title and industry?

Question 2:

When did you first transition into a leadership role where you were responsible to lead other individuals?

Question 3:

When you first became a leader of others, could you describe the most significant challenges that you faced?

Question 4:

What do you believe were the most important factors that assisted you in this transition?

Question 5:

Did you receive on-the-job training when you became a leader of others? If so, please elaborate.

Question 6:

Did you receive formal training when you first became a leader of others? If so, please elaborate.

Question 7:

Based on the above contributions (factors), which do you feel assisted you the most in your transition to a leadership role?

Question 8:

Do you believe that learning through experiences helped you in the transition to leader?

Question 9:

Do you believe that formal learning initiatives assisted you in the transition to leader?

Question 10:

Do you believe that your organisation could have done more to assist you in your transition into a leadership role? If yes, please elaborate.

Additional:

Are there is any other points or comments that you would like to mention about your transition to becoming a leader of others?

Question 11:

Please rate each of the below items from 1 – 5 indicating the impact that each had in assisting your transition to a leadership role. 1 being no impact and 5 being greatest impact.

Key factors	1 No impact	2 Minimal impact	3 Moderate impact	4 High impact	5 Greatest impact
My own personal efforts					
Line manager or internal support/guidance					
Informal training					
Formal training					
Real-world opportunities to apply new skills					
Mentorship or guidance from an individual or individuals outside of your organisation					

Appendix 2: Informed consent letter

Dear Participant

I am a student of the Gordon Institute of Business Science (University of Pretoria) completing my research in partial fulfilment of a master's in business administration. I am conducting research to gain an understanding of the factors that impact a black South African female's transition from self-leadership to leading others. The purpose of the interview is to obtain insights from your personal experience related to the topic.

The interview is expected to last between 30 minutes to an hour to allow me to gain invaluable insights on this subject.

Your participation is voluntary, and you can withdraw at any time without penalty. All data will be kept confidential with identifiers used in place of your name. If you have any concerns, please contact me or my supervisor. Our details are provided below:

Researcher: Chesray Abrahams
Email: 04995709@mygibs.co.za
Contact number: _____
Research Supervisor: Andre Vermaak
Email: _____

Signature of participant: _____
Title of participant: _____
Date: _____
Signature of researcher: _____
Date: _____

Appendix 3: Consistency matrix

Research questions	Literature review	Data collection tools	Analysis
What factors support the transition from self-leadership to leading others within the context of black South African females?	Becker & Bish, 2017 Charan et al, 2010. D'Netto, 2008 Griffith et al, 2019 Freedman, 1998 Kolb & Kolb, 2017 Maloney, 2012 Strahan, 2016 Williams, 2017 Wärnich et al., 2015	Semi-structured interviews Questions 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 17	Content analysis on open-ended questions
What challenges do black South African females face when transitioning from self-leadership to leading others?	Bagraim & Mdlongwa, 2017 Bandara, 2015 Becker & Bish, 2017 Chengadu & Scheepers, 2017 D'Mello, 2015 Derks, Ellemers & van Laar, 2016 Gouws, 2012 Jaga, Arabandi, Jena et al., 2018 Koch, Sackett & Osituyo, 2017 Ng and Sears, 2012 Strahan, 2016	Semi-structured interviews Question 3	Content analysis on open-ended questions
What role does an organisation play in transitioning black South African females from self-leadership to leading others?	Aragon & Valle, 2013 Becker, 2017 D'Netto, 2008 Perrault, 2014 Turgut & Neuhaus, 2020 Turesky & Gallagher, 2011 Wärnich et al., 2015	Semi-structured interviews Questions 5, 6, 8, 9, 10	Content analysis on open-ended questions

Appendix 4: Ethical Clearance

Gordon Institute of Business Science University of Pretoria	Ethical Clearance Approved
<p>Dear Chesray Abrahams,</p> <p>Please be advised that your application for Ethical Clearance has been approved. You are therefore allowed to continue collecting your data. We wish you everything of the best for the rest of the project.</p> <p>Ethical Clearance Form</p> <p>Kind Regards</p>	