

**LINKING THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN TO  
SENIOR MANAGEMENT POSITIONS AND GENDER  
BARRIERS**

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by

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I certify that the report is my own work and all references used are accurately reported.

Signed

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## ABSTRACT

Women form 52 percent of the adult population in South Africa, the majority of the population, but their status in the workplace is marginalized. The Commission of Employment Equity 2003 report revealed that women represent only 37% of the total workforce and 21% of all senior management positions and only 14% of top management positions. The study firstly investigates if gender barriers are creating obstacles for the advancement of women to senior management positions. The evidence of the research indicates that barriers do exist and the most prominent of these barriers included organizational culture, men not supporting women in the organization, division of labour, lack of after care facilities and women not supporting each other. Organizations need to admit that barriers do exist before any meaningful change can be made to the working environment of women. Secondly the study investigates the impact of gender equity targets as some organizations are attempting to increase the number of women in their business. Although gender targets results in an increase of women in the workplace it has negatively impacted the morale of men. Lastly the effectiveness of some of the strategies like mentorship, training and development, networking, flexible work policies are examined. These strategies will only be effective if the organizations are committed in ensuring a balanced workforce. Organizations needs to realize that diversity should be seen as a great opportunity to be encouraged and nurtured.

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **ORIENTATION TO GENDER EQUITY IN THE WORKPLACE**

#### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

“It is vitally important that all structures of government, including the President himself, should understand this fully: that freedom cannot be achieved unless women have been emancipated from all forms of oppression. All of us must take this on board, that the objectives of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) will not have been realized unless we see in visible and practical terms that the conditions of the women in our country have radically changed for the better, and that they have been empowered to intervene in all spheres of life as equals with any other member of society” President Nelson Mandela, Inaugural Speech, April 1994.

The spirit of Nelson Mandela’s foresight has resulted in the government making changes and implementing a strict quota system to restructure the government. President Thabo Mbeki set the pace for gender equality after the 2004 elections, in making sure that national, provincial and regional government were representative of the gender diversity of South Africa. Four of the nine provincial premiers are women, 33% of its legislators are women, 42% of cabinet posts are taken by women and 51% of deputy ministers are women. Prior to 1994 women only represented 1% of these positions. Although Government has made huge headway in the gender equity statistics their ultimate aim is to increase women’s representation in parliament to 50%. On the 23 June 2005 President Mbeki appointed Phumzile Mlambo – Ngcuka as the new Deputy President which was a further indication of the President’s confidence in female leadership. The South African government is committed in ensuring that Gender Equality is holistically achieved in South Africa (SA Government Web site, 2005).

South Africa has made enormous progress in the past 10 years in ensuring that people are treated equally and fairly. However it is still prevalent that equality for women is still taking the back burner. Women occupy positions of lower influence, lower status and pay. The old problem of female stereotyping still exists. The glass ceiling that women encounter is very complex. The government cannot solve this problem on their own; they need the assistance of the private sector

Women form 52 percent of the adult population in South Africa, the majority of the population, but their status in the workplace is marginalized. The Commission of Employment Equity 2003 report revealed that women represent only 37% of the total workforce and 21% of all senior management positions and only 14% of top management positions. The 2005 BWA survey concurs with these results as their survey indicated that females only accounted for 14.7% of all executive positions and 7.1% of directors' positions. This demonstrates that while the South African Government has introduced much legislation to correct the inequities of the previous dispensation, corporate organizations are not committed to follow the example set by Government and change the status quo.

On the other hand many companies have engaged in employment equity policies and gender targets to rectify the gender imbalances in their companies. These policies and gender targets do not automatically translate into equality and in most cases these policies are not sufficient to overcome the barriers in the workplace. The complexities of managing and motivating staff while gender targets are being pursued can prove to be a challenging process, especially in the case of males who have to be tolerant and supportive while their female counterparts are being offered more opportunities than themselves. This situation can create hostility amongst both parties where the males are demotivated and females are not gaining support from their male staff.

Moving forward, organization must firstly admit that there are barriers to female advancement and thereafter put strategies in place to ensure that these barriers are tackled as the current strategies are insufficient. This is evident from the low gender equity

statistics. We still have a long way to travel in this journey of gender equality and President Thabo Mbeki succinctly expresses this sentiment. "It is quite pleasing and exciting to note that South Africa is ranked highly in the world as a country that takes women seriously. While we have achieved an enormous amount in our young democracy, we should not rest on our laurels. More still needs to be done to ensure that women are treated fairly and are embraced as an integral part of our political and economic activities," (Marsland, 2004).

## 1.2 PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

The main purpose of the research is to understand the barriers women encounter in the workforce and to understand what Government and the private sector is doing to ensure that these barriers are overcome. More importantly change can begin only if women are ready and able to take on this challenge. Women need to start taking advantage of the opportunities that are being offered to them.

Many policies and procedures have been introduced by corporate companies to bring about gender equality in the workplace. These policies can however result in negative consequences, especially amongst the men since women are being given first priority in view of the fact that gender quotas need to be met. The researcher will examine the impact that gender targets have on the morale of men. The effectiveness of strategies implemented to overcome the barriers to gender equity will be examined to determine if they are sufficient and sustainable. This research will also aim to prove that in order for gender equity to be sustainable into the future a cooperative and mutual working relationship must be fostered between male and female workers in the workplace. A further aim of this research is to prove that females can add value to the organization provided they are given the opportunity.

## 1.3 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM AND SUB-PROBLEMS

### 1.3.1 PROBLEM

As South Africa moves into a new era of democracy it encounters many challenges. One of these challenges is to ensure that all previously disadvantaged citizens are afforded equal rights and opportunities. Women are recognized as such previously disadvantaged citizens.

In order to ensure that South Africa is able to compete globally, gender diversity has to be unravelled so that the South African workforce can function optimally. There is a significant need to understand the gender barriers, stereotypes and obstacles that women encounter in the corporate world as women have unique skills and capabilities that can be beneficial to companies. These barriers are preventing women from advancing in organizations and to venture into careers that were previously male dominated. Although there has been much research performed internationally there seems to be a relative lack of comprehensive research conducted on South African women in the corporate world.

### 1.3.2 SUB-PROBLEMS

Gender Equity target setting has become a norm in a culture that wishes to rectify the wrongs of the past. However this target setting has both positive and negative impacts. The impact that gender equality has on the male staff needs to be understood to ensure that a productive workforce is cultivated.

Many corporate organizations have initiatives and strategies in place to ensure that progressive steps are taken for women to overcome the many barriers they encounter. These initiatives and programmes will be investigated to determine if they are effective and are achieving its desired goals.

## 1.4 RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

Main Hypothesis: The barriers encountered by women in the workplace have resulted in fewer females than males in senior management positions.

Sub-hypotheses:

- a) Gender Equity targeting setting has impacted male employees negatively in the workplace
- b) The initiatives engaged by companies to overcome the barriers women encounter are ineffective

## 1.5 DEFINITION OF TERMINOLOGY

### **Sex**

Most of us are born either as a female or male and that designation is called our 'sex' which is dependent upon the biological difference between men and women (Nicholson, 1996; Rapport, Baily, Pletcher & Pruitt, 2002).

### **Gender**

Gender refers to the socially constructed understanding of what it means to be a man or woman. Gender is different from sex in that it refers to the social characteristics whereby women and men exist in a dynamic structural relationship to each other. It is a process through which social life is organized at the level of the individual, family and society and it also play a crucial role in the structure of an organization (Nicholson, 1996).

### **Gender Relations**

Nicholson (1996) describes gender relations as power relations through which men and male values have super-ordinate status over women and female values. Socialization into gender roles is an integral part of the maintenance of the patriarchal power structure.

**Gender Equity**

Section 9 of the Bill of Rights (1996) states that, “all people are equal and must be treated equally. No one is allowed to discriminate against you because of your race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, sexual orientation, age, belief, language, culture or birth.” Gender equity means the promotion of equal opportunity and fair treatment for men and women in the personal, social, cultural, political and economic arenas.

**Sex Roles**

Women and men have expectations placed upon them from a range of constituents, identified collectively as ‘society’. These include parents, the family, peers and institutions such as schools, university, religious bodies and work organizations (Nicholson, 1996). To be a boy/man or girl/women can not be left to biology alone. Women and men have to learn what is expected of their sex.

**Sex-role stereotyping**

This is based on everyday beliefs that reinforce traditional views of women’s and men’s characteristics and roles (Nicholson, 1996; Heilman, 1997). These beliefs also have a crucial impact on an organization.

**Male backlash**

Any policy or initiative undertaken by organization to promote females and to empower them can potentially result in male feeling threatened and as a consequence they rebel against females and the organization (Burke & Black, 1997).

**Glass Ceiling**

Artificial barriers based on attitudinal or organizational bias that prevents qualified individuals from advancing upward in their organization into management level positions (Wrigley, 2002). The glass ceiling is the “unseen”, yet unbreachable barrier that keeps minorities and women from rising to the upper rungs of the corporate ladder, regardless of their qualifications or achievements. A glass ceiling inequality represents a gender or racial difference that is not explained by other job relevant characteristics of the employee (Cotter, Joan, Hermsen & Vanneman, 2001).

## 1.6 DELIMITATION OF STUDY

The research has been limited to employees of the Eastern Region only and is thus not representative of management in South Africa as a whole. The results should however give managers an insight into the obstacles that females encounter in the business world and assist them with possible resolutions to their barriers.

This study is limited to look only at the issues encountered in the workplace and not at the issues that females encounter in society at large.

## 1.7 IMPORTANCE OF STUDY AND POTENTIAL BENEFITS

There has been very little progress globally towards achieving a gender equal workplace. Some say that it is simply a matter of time and argue that the 'pipeline theory' will allow for the natural career progression for females. Most people find that this explanation for the lack of representation at the top ranks unsatisfactory (Heilman, 1997).

The total emancipation of women is not won yet. For numerous reasons women are still not being treated equally. This study will use Eskom to prove that this statement is valid. The researcher will look at some of the reasons why gender equality is not working and how some of the barriers have been overcome.

It is clear from the many research studies conducted on gender equity that there is still a long way to go towards building an equitable society and workplace in which women are able to achieve their ambitions and realize their full potential. This study is aimed at assisting women in their progressive journey forward.

## 1.8 OUTLINE OF RESEARCH REPORT

Chapter 1 covers the introduction to the study. It gives an introduction to the issues encountered by females in the workforce. This chapter also deals with the research problems, the importance of the study and also gives a breakdown of key definitions.

In chapter 2 the importance of gender equity and the gender equity issues encountered internationally and in South Africa will be discussed. Chapter 2 also looks at the gender equity statistics globally and in South Africa. South African legislation regarding employment equity and affirmative action has also been investigated. The leadership styles of men and women are also explored. This chapter goes on to further discuss gender at work looking specifically at the gender work structure and gender role socialization. Various barriers to gender equity are thereafter explored together with some potential strategies to overcoming these barriers.

Chapter 3 explains the research methodology utilized in this study. The unit of analysis, population, sample and sample size are examined in detail. The research procedures and techniques as well as the data collection and analysis techniques utilized is discussed. In addition the reliability and validity of the study is covered together with its limitations.

Chapter 4 gives an overview of Eskom Holdings Ltd and specifically focuses on the benefits that this study will have to Eskom. Eskom's gender equity statistics has been scrutinized together with the policies and procedures that Eskom has in place to assist women in their development.

In Chapter 5 the exploratory data analysis and statistical data analysis are covered. The main hypothesis which relates to the existence of gender barriers in the workplace is tested by looking at the various gender barriers and determining if they are impeding the advancement of women. The sub-hypotheses impact of gender target setting and the effectiveness of gender strategies are also explored in this chapter.

The results of the research are summarized in Chapter 6. The differences and similarities of the research results are compared to the literature study and are discussed under the three dimensions, namely gender barriers, gender strategies and impact of gender target setting.

Chapter 7 is the concluding chapter where recommendations are provided for gender barriers, gender strategies and gender target settings. Suggestions for future research are also highlighted in this chapter.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **2 GENDER EQUITY IN THE WORKPLACE**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter gender statistics globally will be examined first. Thereafter South Africa gender statistics will be scrutinized looking specifically at the Commission of Employment Equity results for 2001-2003 and also the Business Woman Association 2004-2005 results. All legislation relating to employment equity will be explored, paying particular attention to the impact of affirmative action in the workplace. The importance of gender equity in the workplace will be elaborated as well as the leadership styles of men and women.

Gender role socialization plays a pivotal role in the way that females are portrayed in the workplace, together with organization culture and structure. These social structures can either empower women or create barriers to their advancement.

There are many barriers that impede women from moving up the corporate ladder. The 'old boy's network', women not supporting women, family commitments, lack of training and skills and gender stereotyping are some of the barriers that will be examined. To counter many of these barriers there are proactive actions that corporate organizations can explore.

#### **2.2 GENDER STATISTICS GLOBALLY**

Over the past few decades, changes in demographic, social and economic forces have resulted in a large increase in the number of women in paid employment around the world. As the role of women in the global economy increases more woman are pursuing careers in management (Omar & Davidson, 2001).

The women's Charter of 1954 aptly states that the "The level of civilization which any society has reached can only be measured by the degree of freedom its members enjoy. The status of women is a test of civilization" (Marsland, 2004).

Data on trends in economic activity rates shows a steady increase in female labour force participation over time, alongside an apparent decrease in male rates. In 1960, women constituted 23 percent of the labour force. By 1985, this had increased to 36 percent and by 1991 to 41 percent (Baden, Hasim & Meintjies, 1998). The International Labour Organization (ILO) also concur that women represents 40% of the world's labour force; however they hold less than 5% of the top jobs in corporations worldwide. The progress towards gender equity has been very slow. Perception, stereotypes and laws need to be altered to facilitate women (Van der Colff & Van Scheers, 2004).

The proportion of women managers varies significantly amongst countries. In the USA the representation of women in management grew from 16 percent in 1970, to 44 percent in 1998, a significant achievement. In countries as diverse as Japan, Turkey and Australia women's representation in management increases by as much as 1 to 25 percent (Omar & Davidson, 2001).

In Britain although women dominate occupations like nursing, teaching and social work, senior positions are still occupied by men. During a 2000 survey it was confirmed that women only held 18% of all management positions. In the UK and Canada there has been evidence that this trend is moving in the opposite direction (Wilson, 2002).

Japan has greater gender inequality such as wage differentials and lower employment status as compared to the United States. Japanese parents prefer to invest in a son's education rather than a female child's as they are hopeful that their male child will be able to support them in their old age (Krajewski & Burke).

In almost all countries, management is seen as a career suitable only for men and hence is dominated by men. Women are concentrated in a small number of jobs, best described as 'traditionally female'. These so called female jobs include those in education, health services, and finance, banking, communication and personnel services. There are few women managers gaining entrance into manufacturing and technical based organizations (Omar & Davidson, 2001).

The gender statistics pertaining to South Africa will now be explored.

### 2.3 GENDER STATISTICS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Working women in South Africa until the early 1980s were restricted by the lack of various laws from participating equally in the workplace. Women had no legislation protecting them from discriminatory work practices. Black women have been particularly compromised by former apartheid legislations where their mobility was affected (Flood, Hoosain & Primo, 1997).

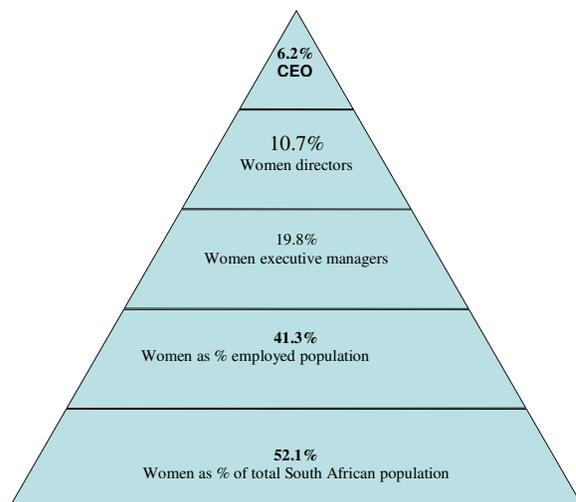
The South African Census of 2001 indicated that females constitute the majority of the population 53% and males only 47%. The Commission of Employment Equity results for 2002 revealed that women only represent 35% of total people employed. This indicates that women are under-represented in the workplace. The survey also indicated that women currently hold 12% and men 88% of all top management positions in South Africa. In senior management, women hold 18% and men 82% of the positions (Commission of EE, 2002).

In comparison the 2003 Commission of Employment Equity results indicate woman represent 37% of the total workforce, which is a mere 2% increase compared to the 2002 results. The statistics of women in senior management positions increased to 21% and the number of women in top management positions increased to 14% (Commission of EE, 2003). Despite South Africa's many legislations to ensure gender equality, South African statistics remain a source of concern in terms of gender representation in its management structure.

The Business Women's Association (BWA) census that was conducted in 2003 and 2004 is further proof that South African women in senior management positions are inadequately represented. This census is focused on women in corporate leadership and is focused on all companies listed on the JSE and 19 state owned enterprises. The 2004 BWA Nedbank-sponsored Catalyst census stated that woman constitute nearly 52% of the South African population, however they only comprised 41% of the total workforce and only 14.7% of executive managers and 7.1% of all directors in the country. There are only 18 chief executive officers and board chairpersons compared to 357 men in these similar positions (BWASA, 2003).

The census was repeated in 2004 to measure and track the changes in performance against the benchmarks set in the inaugural study and the results were released on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2005. The 2005 census results are summarized in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1: BWA: 2005 Census pyramid



Adapted from BWA census 2005:6

Women constituted 19.8% of all executive managers which is only a 5.1% increase compared to the 2003 census and 10.7% of all directors, a mere 3.6% increase in relation to

the 2003 results. These increased percentages indicate that corporate South Africa is attempting to improve on its gender equality statistics; however it has still a long journey to undertake before reasonable progress can be achieved.

The Commission of Employment Equity 2002 and 2003 results and the BWA 2004 and 2005 results indicate that women are poorly represented at the higher echelons of management. However it must be conceded that the last 10 years of South Africa's new democracy has seen many new legislations aiming at improving the inequities amongst race and gender. These legislations and their impact will now be further examined.

## 2.4 LEGISLATIONS TO ASSIST EMPLOYMENT EQUITY IN SOUTH AFRICA

In 1948 when the National Party was the ruling party of South Africa they introduced the policy of apartheid, which was a system of racial segregation and White supremacy. The African National Congress (ANC) consistently opposed racial oppression. As a result of their repressive policies the international society imposed sanctions against South Africa. Due to increased internal and external pressure the National Party was left with no option but to negotiate with the ANC and this culminated in the first democratic election in April 1994.

The new South African Government introduced many laws, policies and programmes aimed at correcting the injustices of the previous government and improving the status of the previously disadvantaged. Quotas and employment equity targeting was pursued as a means of rectifying the imbalances (Flood, Hoosain & Primo, 1997). Women were also identified as being inequitably treated and government then engaged in a number of legislative measures to overcome the legacy of inequality. Some of the legislation introduced to assist the empowerment of women included:

- The Constitution of South Africa, 1996 and the Basic Conditions of Employment Act in 1997
- The Employment Equity Act 1998, which ensures equal representation of women in the workplace
- The Skills Development Act 1998 and the Skills Development Levies Act of 1999 aimed at addressing skill shortages and training issues
- The Labour Relations Act 1995, which gives women the same rights as their male counterparts in the workplace

The Employment Equity Act No. 55 of 1998 aims to ensure that the legacies of apartheid in the South African workplace are redressed. The Act's goal is to ensure that equal opportunity and fair treatment is afforded to black people, women and people with disabilities (Thomas, 2002). One of the strategies utilized to ensure employment equity in the workplace is affirmative action.

#### **2.4.1 AFFIRMATIVE ACTION**

Affirmative action has many advantages in addressing previous inequities; however it has also been globally criticized. Some of the concerns that have been expressed are (Thomas, 2002):

- The over-regulation of the labour market, coupled with the government's role of 'watchdog' will result in decrease in overseas investments and in entrepreneurial initiatives
- The administrative costs to private sector relating to compliance with the legislation will impact on companies' growth.
- The shortage of skills in some sectors will make black skills more expensive and unaffordable to smaller companies.
- Indirect opportunity costs will be incurred by, for example, poor hiring decisions (to meet employee targets) and the declining morale of White employees.
- Race classification will be heightened and "reverse discrimination" will lead to a decrease in employee loyalty and the lack of retention of skilled employees

- Those people from designated groups who still require training and development will have unrealistic short term expectations that will further increase racial and social conflict within companies.
- Those from designated groups, expecting secured positions, may adopt a culture of entitlement that undermines initiative, self-confidence and self-reliance.

Heilman (1997) also criticizes affirmative action programs as tainting its recipients with a stigma of incompetence and also adding to the sex stereotyping behaviour. If someone is thought to be hired or placed as a result of affirmative action efforts, then that justifies to onlookers the reason for the selection decision independent of the job incumbents' qualification for the position. Affirmative action can oddly enough feed rather than quell the flames of sex bias in organizations. However the potential benefits and the results that it can create in the workplace should not be underestimated (Booyesen, 1999a).

#### **2.4.2 RETENTION OF PREVIOUSLY DISADVANTAGED INDIVIDUALS**

Due to the favourable opportunities and increase in demand for women in the business sector this has resulted in the 'job hopping' phenomenon (Booyesen, 2005). This is due to the current skills shortage being experienced especially amongst blacks. Booyesen (2005) also claims the following reasons for low retention of employees:

- Lip service policies by a firm's leadership about the need for employment equity with low commitment to employment equity from top management
- A lack of cultural sensitivity where new recruits are expected to assimilate into the current organizational culture
- A lack of cultural awareness programmes and of an organizational culture that values diversity
- Black women are employed as token appointment and are not given sufficient decision making responsibility
- no effective talent management
- Limited opportunity for access to high visibility projects or positions

- Restricted access to mentors and lack of role models

The South African workplace is characterized by adversarial relationships, lack of trust and communication between individuals and groups, poor teamwork, apparent absence of employee commitment and motivation to organizational goals, high staff turnover, especially amongst those from designated groups, industrial conflict and low levels of productivity, profitability, quality, and customer service (Thomas, 2002). This is thus not an ideal environment in which to promote gender equality without having genuine grounds for the appointment.

Another consequence of Employment Equity is male backlash. This needs to be managed or else organizations will have serious repercussions.

### **2.4.3 MALE BACKLASH**

Backlash arises as a result of policies, programs, initiatives undertaken by an organization to promote the hiring and advancement of marginalized employees. Every time women collectively make progress towards equality, instances of backlash arise. As feminism increases and males feel threatened that their ability to fulfil the male provider and breadwinner role is being attacked male backlash is on the increase. Furthermore when jobs are now advertised they are specifically being earmarked for females. Backlash may be a rational response to perceptions of reverse discrimination. Backlash may also be irrational and an over-reaction since more men than women continue to be promoted (Burke & Black, 1997).

Male backlash has consequences for women, men and organizations. Male backlash influences the relationship of men and women resulting in increased tension between them. Male backlash solidifies the bonds between some men as they share the sentiment that they are an endangered species and that they are now being discriminated against. Male backlash also has an effect on organizations in a variety of ways. Considerable energy may be dissipated in tension, anger, resentment and frustration. Men may rebel against and

undermine organizational efforts to support women's career advancement (Burke & Black, 1997). The potential for affirmative action backlash is especially great in instances of promotion where women are given preferential treatment (Rosen & Jerdee, 1979).

Employee frustration and negative attitudes engendered by affirmative action policies may cause numerous organizational problems (Rosen & Jerdee, 1979):

- Lower job satisfaction and work performance
- Perception of dead –end career stagnation
- Increased turnover
- Greater militancy in efforts to protect job status
- Erosion of support for affirmative action policies at all levels

Organizations realize that strategies need to be developed to deal with male backlash. Backlash is better dealt with head-on than swept under the rug. Burke & Black (1997) identified four options of addressing the backlash problem:

- Ignore male backlash as the energy devoted to deal with male backlash may detract from the primary goal of advancing women
- Zero tolerance to backlash
- The third option is to co-opt men where both men and women becomes allies in changing the system
- The fourth option is to acknowledge backlash and encourage its expression. The underlying theory is that by allowing men to express their feelings they will become more open to appeals to reason through education.

Although there are many negatives to Employment Equity the advantages certainly outweigh the disadvantages as is discussed below.

## 2.5 IMPORTANCE OF GENDER EQUALITY

As South Africa is moving away from its isolation and years of sanctions, towards where it now has to compete globally, it realizes that it has to have a dynamic workforce to meet the challenges of a competitive working environment. Thomas (2002) states that internationally it has been proven that a diverse workforce can benefit the country by:

- tapping the skills not previously available to the organization
- enhancing company creativity and problem solving, responding quickly and effectively to diverse markets and managing productive relationships with diverse customers, suppliers and distributors
- promoting a culture of inclusivity, critical to a commitment to total quality
- enhancing team performance
- attracting and retaining the best talent especially amongst those that representing new consumer markets

Diversity can be seen as a great opportunity to encourage and nurture in a truly inclusive culture like South Africa. The strength of a diverse workforce can be used to increase the organizations problem solving and decision making ability (Van der Colff & Van Scheers, 2004).

There is an increasing awareness that the male management practices are not superior and is not the preferred style to manage a diverse workforce. The feminine approach to leadership is more suitable to the diverse South African workplace and also to world trends where the empowerment of the workforce is taking priority (Booyesen, 1999). Women managers listen, motivate, empower and provide support to their staff and this is mainly due to their socialized and internalized gender behaviour (Booyesen, 1999a).

As the leadership approach of women plays a paramount role in their management style an elaborate comparison between the leadership styles of men and women will be examined, together with the difference and similarity between race and gender.

### **2.5.1 LEADERSHIP STYLES OF MEN AND WOMEN**

Historically leadership has been construed as primarily a masculine enterprise; however as the number of female leaders have increased this philosophy has been questioned.

As organizations become more flat and teamwork becomes the norm, management styles that are aggressive, competitive and task orientated as commonly associated with the leadership styles of men is giving way to the female styles that are more relation–orientated, nurturing and caring (Omar & Davidson, 2001; Pounder & Coleman, 2002). The diverse leadership of male and female managers will now be examined.

Women find participative management more natural than men because they feel more comfortable interacting with people. Interactive leadership styles utilized by women has been beneficial as this style encourages participation, information sharing, enhances self-worth of others and finally energizes others (Appelbaum, Audet & Miller, 2002). Oshagbemi & Gill (2003) further adds that women’s cooperative and empowering leadership style fosters team building.

When employees do not meet expectations, women are more likely than men to buffer criticism by finding something praiseworthy to say. Women will more likely to describe their business as a family unlike male counterparts. Female managers subscribe to high levels of consultation and participation. Human resource management and communication is of paramount importance to female managers. Appelbaum et al (2002) further states that women have good listening skills, well developed interpersonal skill and a soft approach to handling people. Therefore women choose a relationship–orientated leadership style, while men focus on disseminating information and demonstrating competence (Oshagbemi & Gill, 2003). Due to females having a high relationship-orientated leadership style their management styles are described as more transformational. Male leaders on the other hand tend to incline more to transactional leadership where active management by exception is employed and they place a high reliance on power and position authority (Pounder & Coleman, 2002; Vinnicombe & Singh, 2002; Eagly & Carli, 2003). There is a positive

correlation between transformational leadership, leadership effectiveness as well as subordinate commitment and performance (Vinnicombe & Singh, 2002). Booysen (1999a) has further proven that the leadership styles of South African males and females differ which is in line with international studies. Her study has also concluded that the female profile fits the new approach to leadership better than the male profile.

Women also tended to score higher on leadership scales measuring orientation towards production and the attainment of results. In contrast men tended to score higher on strategic planning and organization vision (Oshagbemi & Gill, 2003). Oshagbemi & Gill's (2003) research on men and women leadership roles found that women managers delegate less than their male counterparts but their directive, consultative and participative leadership styles were similar.

There are substantial differences between the values men and women have towards work. It can be concluded that these anomalies could contribute to the so called gender differences. Men tended to be more concerned about money, independence, and long term career goals whereas women tended to be more people orientated, concerned with security and affective values such as esteem, co-workers, opportunity to interact with people, fair and considerate supervisor (Elizur, 2001).

Appelbaum et al (2002) summarized some of the differences between male and female leadership style as discussed above in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Male vs. Female leadership attributes

Male	Female
Structure	Consideration
Transactional	Transformational
Autocratic	Participative
Instruction-giving	Socio-expressive
Business-orientated	People-orientated

Leadership and Organizational Journal: Appelbaum et al (2002:48)

In order to be effective leader's women have adopted an androgynous view of managerial roles as this is perceived as the most successful preference (Pounder & Coleman, 2002; Vinnicombe & Singh, 2002; Eagly & Carli, 2003). If a leader possesses both feminine and masculine characteristics this is a sure recipe to succeed as a leader. Oshagbemi & Gill (2003) state that although the way men and women lead are different each of their style is effective in their own right. It can therefore be concluded that effective management is not the exclusive domain of either gender and both can learn from each other (Appelbaum et al, 2002).

However incongruity between expectations about women and expectations about leaders underlie prejudice against female leaders. Stereotypes about how a woman should behave shadow an effective leader (Eagly & Carli, 2003). The socialization process has resulted in women developing values that are different from the traditional competitive, controlling and aggressive leadership behaviours of men (Pounder & Coleman, 2002).

It can therefore be concluded that women have the tools to be effective leaders in the workplace and their transformational leadership style is proving to be an asset.

Nevertheless men and women have to adopt androgynous leadership styles so that they are equipped to manage a diverse multi-cultural society.

### **2.5.2 SIMILIARITY BETWEEN RACE AND GENDER**

Race and gender should not be seen as independent or "separate social construct" but should be viewed as inter-reliant and interdependent (Booyesen, 2005). Both racism and sexism are similar as they oppress individuals. Discrimination against race and sex can be both subtle and direct and managers can experience it without even acknowledging that they are being consistently discriminated against (Khumalo, 2005).

### **2.5.3 DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BLACK AND WHITE FEMALES IN MANAGEMENT**

There are vast differences between white and black females in management in South Africa. Black women face a dual challenge, firstly being black and then being women. Although both white and black women have experienced gender oppression and discrimination, “white women have had indirect access to economic, social and political power via their association with white men”. Further white women were not subject to racial discrimination (Booyesen, 1999a).

Booyesen (1999a) has found significant difference between the leadership styles of blacks and white females, with the “black female having closer resemblance to the feminine leadership styles”. This diversity of the leadership styles amongst women must be seen as strength and must be maximized.

Women both black and white were, and are still the minority group in decision making powers. However white women still have more management power than black women and their position equals that of black men (Booyesen, 2005).

Black women find themselves having a “triple advantage” position in South Africa as a result of Employment Equity (EE) legislations, preferential treatment of black women and also the Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) legislations favours women. They will count as one on EE reports and twice on BEE reports, firstly as blacks and then as women thus resulting in their triple advantage. However the “current power structures” in the corporate industry due to the dominance of whites and males does not support black women but creates obstacles for advancement of black women. Black women, especially have to learn to cope in this “bi-culturalistic” environment and are therefore more likely to understand “different social identities” (Booyesen, 2005).

Conversely white women although they have greater management power and skills are identified as an “invisible group” due to their double disadvantage position. They are included in the EE legislation but are ranked last and not included in the BEE legislation. As

the pool of black female skills increases white women are going to “lose more management powers in the future, the power which they actually never had” (Booyesen, 2005).

To understand the ways in which women and men operate at the organizational level it is useful to examine gender socialization, organizational culture and structure.

## 2.6 GENDER AT WORK

### 2.6.1 GENDER ROLE SOCIALIZATION IN THE WORKPLACE

Social relations in a workplace is important as it provides a sense of belonging, affirmation, bonding and support and hence is a means by which an organization can achieve its goals (Bird, 2003). The way men and women interact on a daily basis determines individual actions, thoughts and feelings as gender “appropriate”. The workplace behaviour for men and women is informed by their psychological development and internalization of cultural meanings through the process of socialization (Gazso, 2004).

The social relations men and women have in the business help to construct and sustain widely held stereotypes of gender differences. Male workers are of the opinion that they gain wider acceptance in social relations if they conform to masculine stereotypes. If they do not conform they run the risk of being alienated from their own sex category social group. However this trend is dependent on the composition of the social group (Bird, 2003). Women are not seen to have the same characteristics for leadership as men and this is elaborated in the previous section (Wilson, 2002).

Men feel at ease working with women provided that the women co-workers occupy a lower hierarchical level position. The tables are reversed once females occupy the same or higher level jobs compared to their male counterpart. Male workers actually report lower levels of job satisfaction with their work relationships as their relationship contravenes their male dominated stereotype thinking (Bird, 2003, Ostroff & Atwater, 2003).

In male dominated occupations men will stick together and resist women as co-workers. Men feel at ease working with other men and value male input compared to female input as they assume men are more competent (Bird, 2003). Managerial women in male dominated organizations were likely to be less satisfied. This results in lower commitment and higher managerial female turnover. These women are most likely to emulate stereotypical masculine leadership styles (Vinnicombe & Singh, 2002). Eagly & Carli (2003) affirms that male dominated environments can be difficult for women to perform to their maximum. Women thus face discriminatory barriers in masculine environments which impacts their advancement and promotion. Women are still thinking in “think manager, think male” mode which may limit them from exploring and experimenting with new management styles (Vinnicombe & Singh, 2002).

Organizations need to value the full range of individual traits that men and women possess that is conducive to the working environment. This will then create a more happy and effective working environment (Bird, 2003). The culture of an organization plays a vital role in ensuring an effective and productive workforce and is the framework within which men and women socialize in an organization. Organizational structure can foster either a negative or positive working environment.

## **2.6.2 ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND CULTURE**

### **2.6.2.1 How is organizational culture formed?**

Organizational culture is the study of norms, values, beliefs and ways of behaving within an organization. Studying the organizational culture is a useful means of determining whether gender discrimination is prevalent in the workplace (Mills, 2002). The culture of an organization can be viewed as the soul of that organization. It provides meaning and direction not only for the organization but also for the individuals who make up an organization (Van der Colff & Van Scheers, 2004).

When new employees are introduced into the organization they are made aware of the rules and values to ensure that the dominant culture of the organization is perpetuated. The

cultural mores of the organization pre-exist the individual employee and operate to restrict, stifle or promote innovation and productivity (Puffer, 2004; Nicolson, 1996).

### **2.6.2.2 INEQUITIES IN THE ORGANIZATION CULTURE**

Women have limited access to authority and power due to being located in the most marginalized structures of the economy (Smith, 2002) also referred to as horizontal segregation (Gazso, 2004). Men occupy positions that are supervisory or administrative, full time, high in pay and status and that are often in the transport, communications and manufacturing sectors. Women on the other hand are concentrated in non-standard work, usually clerical, work part-time or in temporary positions that are characterized by low skill requirements, low pay and few benefits. In professional positions, women continue to be disproportionately represented in “feminine” nursing, teaching, and social science professions (Gazso, 2004). Men preserve power and privileges by limiting opportunities for mobility to themselves. Women end up supervising other women, and earn lower salaries than men who occupy similar positions (Smith, 2002).

Inequities persist within different jobs as management and professions measures commitment to the long hours and overtime invested in work. Willingness to work long hours and take work home is a major indicator of measuring ambition and commitment. Cultures that encourage long hours could be argued as discriminating against those with family commitments (Wilson, 2002).

The structural feminist paradigm which looked at organizational groups where women were the minority, found that this created the ideal environment for male stereotyping (Simpson, 1997; Bird, 2003). Organizations typically favour stereotypical masculine values and reward practices that conform to sex-based values (Appelbaum et al, 2002). However the strength in number hypothesis proves that as the number of women increase in a particular position this only enhances other women to advance in the organizational hierarchy and hence strengthens the power of women in the organization (Smith, 2002; Appelbaum et al, 2002).

The organizational culture is important to an employee in fostering job satisfaction (Veale & Gold, 1998). If a company is too rigid then employees do not attain job satisfaction and therefore seek new employment and hence the retention levels of females are low. Organizational culture needs to be challenged so that differences can be made and change can occur. If gender equity is promoted then organizational effectiveness is improved. This is known as the “dual agenda” (Kolb & Merrill-Sands, 1999). Collaboration and teamwork amongst employees and senior management allows a company to easily meet its goals and mission.

Women do not want special treatment or positive discriminations but prefer to have equal opportunity in the workplace (Veale & Gold, 1998). This can only be achieved through a culture shift within the organization and support from senior management. Hence the organization context plays a crucial role in shaping the next generation of managers (Vinnicombe & Singh, 2002). Although the organizational social norms, structure and culture can limit gender progress there are still many other gender barriers women encounter in the workplace.

## 2.7 BARRIERS TO GENDER EQUITY IN SENIOR POSITIONS

Women are not found in managerial positions in proportion to their presence in the workforce due to barriers to women’s advancement. Whether these barriers are real or imagined, the structural barriers to women’s career progress should not be considered as single, isolated ones but as multi –level impediments that impinge on women’s progress at the entry level as well as every occupational/functional and hierarchical level throughout the company. Once one barrier has been evaded or overcome, others come into play. The situation facing women is thus complex, multi-dimensional and multi-faceted (Van der Colff & Van Scheers, 2004). These barriers create a “glass ceiling” for women at their place of work.

### **2.7.1 WHAT IS A GLASS CEILING?**

The glass ceiling refers to barriers that are preventing women from advancing upwards in the organization. The glass ceiling hinders not only individuals, but society as a whole. It reduces the pool of potential corporate leaders and deprives the economy of new leaders, new sources of creativity and 'would be' pioneers of the business world. In order to become global contenders and maintain a competitive advantage organizations must be prepared to dismantle the glass ceiling (Wrigley 2002). Women experience unequal workplace experience because they are crossing over clearly laid out "ideological boundaries" which portrays the men as breadwinners and the women as the caregivers (Gazso, 2004).

Cotter et al (2001) argues that the glass ceiling inequity represents a gender or racial difference that is greater at higher levels of the hierarchies than at the lower level of the hierarchies. The gender gap not only grows but accelerates as one move up the hierarchical order.

There has been no scientific evidence reported validating the often made assumption that women lack the drive to get to the top. In fact no differences between managerial women and men have been found in level of motivation, no psychological needs and motives such as the need for achievement or need for power. There has also been no research evidence found that is supportive of the commonly held idea that women managers are less committed to their careers because their primary commitment is to their family and home. A survey conducted by the American Management Association depicts women as compared to men managers as more committed to their careers, more willing to relocate and more likely to make their jobs top priority when family/work conflicts occur (Heilman, 1997).

Despite this however, beliefs that there are differences between men and women still obstinately persist justifying the under-representation of women. The key factor is to understand the barriers confronting women in the corporate world and also understanding the psychological phenomenon of sex stereotypes

### **2.7.2 GENDER ROLE SOCIALIZATION**

Gender role socialization can create many barriers in the organization as already discussed in the previous section Gender at Work (2.6) and is further expanded.

The upbringing of a female and male also contributes to the glass ceiling of an individual. Humans are gendered individuals that are easily influenced by the perceived gender differences. Women and men do not leave their gender role socialization at the door when coming to work. Similarly women are socialized to accept more limited views of success; they are taught that they can achieve only certain career goals in only limited job titles. Women freely accept these limitations as the 'way things are' and seldom challenge the parameters shaped during those formative years (Wrigley, 2002).

This rigid gender role socialization reinforces the structure of society and of the organization and can create segregation of labour in the workplace (Wrigley, 2002).

### **2.7.3 ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE**

The organization culture as discussed in section 2.6.2 plays a critical role in shaping the behaviour of employees and determining the success of the organization. The culture of an organization can either impede or promote diversity at the workplace.

### **2.7.4 THE DIVISION OF LABOUR DUE TO GENDER STEREOTYPING**

Although there are differences amongst men and women there also exists the division of labour according to gender stereotyped roles as discussed in the previous section Gender Role Socialization (2.6.1) and Inequities of Organizational culture (2.6.2.2).

The gender division of labour is prominent in many organizations. The employment that are traditionally occupied by woman are nursing and paramedical occupations, teaching, clerical and sales job. On the other hand women workers are under-represented in the following categories (Flood et al, 1997):

- Artisans, apprentices and related occupations

- Transport, delivery, communication occupations
- Registered engineers
- Judges or magistrates

As per the 2003 Employment Equity report discrepancies exist in South Africa with respect to the division of labour between men and women in the corporate world. Men occupied 74.8% of legislators, senior official and manager's positions, 58.8% technicians and associate professionals, 85.7% craft and related trade work and 75.8% plant and machine operators. Women on the other hand dominated the "softer positions" namely 55.7% professionals and 67.8% clerks.

This division of labour is due to individual, organizational and social barriers.

### **2.7.5 GENDER STEREOTYPING**

Gender role socialization in the workplace elicits gender stereotypical behaviour.

Stereotypes about groups of people are often inaccurate or they are an overgeneralization which does not apply to the individual group member who is being targeted. Stereotypes thus become the basis of faulty reasoning, leading to biased feelings and actions, disadvantaging others, not because of what they like or what they have done, but because of the groups to which they are deemed to belong. Some of the typical stereotypes are that men are thought to be strong and active and women are thought to be weak and passive. Also men are described as decisive, independent, rational, objective and self-confident whereas women are described as indecisive, dependent, emotional, non-objective and insecure. The traits associated with men and women are not only different but also are valued differently. Male values are considered to be more highly valued than those concerned with nurturance and affiliation typically ascribed to women (Heilman, 1997).

One of the stereotypes held by men is the belief that men are more suitable to be the primary breadwinners as women are less suitable to pursue this responsibility. The other stereotype behaviour refers to the characteristics men are thought to possess. Some of

these characteristics include competitiveness, lack of empathy and emotional detachment. The show of emotions and empathy are associated in most work settings with weakness and dependence and are thus more suited to women and femininity. Conventional stereotypes are stronger in male dominated work groups as compared to a mixed – sex work group (Bird, 2003).

If women do not mirror the behaviour of males then they are judged as incompetent. Women are not given the liberty to practice their own managerial style and their own individualism (Liff & Ward, 2001). One of the structures that promote male stereotyping is the ‘Old Boys Network’ which is predominately a networking amongst men at work.

#### **2.7.6 OLD BOYS’ NETWORK**

Male stereotyping undermines the level of knowledge, skills and attributes a female has and creates hurdles for the advancement of women. In order to ensure that women are maintained in the minority, informal structures amongst men known as the ‘Men’s Club’ or ‘Old Boys Network’ were formed. Old boy networks was used to have informal discussions relating to work where information was shared, particularly up-to-date information. The function of the club was to cement group solidarity amongst men and reinforce predominantly male values (Simpson, 1997). Gendered social structures are regarded as an advantage to men over women, giving men greater opportunity, power and psychological and emotional rewards (Bird, 2003; Wrigley, 2002). These networks generate ‘institutional impediments to stall women from advancing in the organization (Appelbaum et al, 2002).

The social identity theory claims that people identify more with members that have similar characteristics such as gender, race or ethnicity (Chow & Crawford, 1984; Bird, 2003). Men in an all male group reported higher levels of comfort, of being themselves, with workmates than men in mixed –sex groups (Bird, 2003). Organization needs to ensure that less discriminatory and prejudice policies are practiced to ensure fair and equal treatment of all employees (Chow & Crawford, 1984; Bird, 2003). Organizations that value masculinity stereotypes while ignoring the wellbeing of their employees may affect organizational levels

of productivity and effectiveness (Bird, 2003). Once gender stereotypical behaviour is reflected in the workplace structure, women are not able to reach their maximum output (Gazso, 2004).

### **2.7.7 WOMEN TURNING AGAINST OTHER WOMEN**

Women do not support each other as they reach the higher hierarchies of management. The stereotypical perception is that women at the top are determined not to see other women advancing (Wrigley, 2002).

### **2.7.8 BALANCE BETWEEN WORK AND HOME**

“We must move away from the myth of separate worlds, as though life at home has nothing to do with life in the company”. These two worlds intersect and companies need to take cognizance of this. People who felt powerless at work took their anger home and those that had problems at home could not be productive at work (Puffer, 2004). When women opt for careers, they add to their lives new sets of role demand without a decrease in their traditional roles as wives and mothers (Omar & Davidson, 2001).

Married women with children limit themselves from applying for promotions due to the challenging roles of managing a family and a high-ranking career. Women work long hours, take work home and work over the weekends. Women then begin playing a juggling game between work and home commitments (Liff & Ward, 2001). Women opt out of positions of authority because they are more likely than men to assume the bulk of the family responsibilities as a result of this unequal division of labour (Smith, 2002).

Women still spend far too much time doing domestic labour although there has been an increase in the number of women entering the labour market (Gazso, 2004). Women on average do about 70% of the housework (Wilson, 2002) These women experience an unequal “second shift” in their responsibility for family care-giving and they also experience an unequal “third shift” compared to men, that of juggling work/family conflicts. This juggling

can actually ensure that women's inequity in the workplace is maintained and that women's advancement is stunted (Wilson, 2002; Gazso, 2004; Krajewski & Burke). Women claim that they lack the physical energy to strike a balance between a family and work life (Vinnicombe & Singh, 2003).

Most married women and men see nothing wrong with an unequal division of labour at home, the unequal division of labour is seen as fair. The proportion of men's time devoted to paid labour hardly changes if they have children; in fact they spend more time in paid labour when their children are under seven years old. Men spend less time on housework because they believe that the partner who makes more money has more power and therefore does less work at home (Wilson, 2002). This view is referred to as the **Family Power Theory** which suggests that as one spouse increases resources, his or her power increases. Thus Family Power Theory claims that household labour is an outcome of differential power between spouses (Krajewski & Burke).

As a result women in senior positions are of the impression that starting a family will spell the end of their career and they are less likely to have children compared to their male counterparts. In order to reduce the conflict of their dual roles women managers may choose to remain single and childless (Veale & Gold, 1998; Omar & Davidson, 2001). There are very few role models of senior managers with children who can motivate other women that parenthood and professional working life is possible (Wilson, 2002). If they approach their management regarding reduced working hours this will be portrayed as a lack of commitment and will result in them being excluded from consideration for promotions (Veale & Gold, 1998; Wilson 2002).

Women's unequal work experience is also as a result of the occupational choices they make. Their differing work patterns, namely taking time to have children, working part-time instead of full time, working shorter hours are choices made as a result of women's family responsibilities. Since women naturally desire to have families, they are naturally different

from men and it is this difference that determines their inequality in the workplace (Gazso, 2004).

### **2.7.9 PERSONALITY TRAITS**

Perfectionism was another characteristic that women believe may be holding them back to advancing. Women have a need to complete a task resembling a high quality output and then this desire could lead to unnecessary extra time being taken to reach that stage (Vinnicombe & Singh, 2003).

All of the barriers above hinder women from progressing. We will now look at some of the tactics utilized by women to overcome these stereotypes and barriers so that they can become successful businesswomen.

## **2.8 BREAKING THROUGH THE GLASS CEILING**

The glass ceiling is costly, resulting in lost productivity by employees who are demotivated due to lack of advancement in their careers and high turnover costs (Ragins, Townsend & Marttis, 1998).

In order to remove the 'glass ceiling' that many women stumble upon corporate leaders need to have a thorough understanding of the barriers faced by women. Further, an understanding of the organizational environment women work in also has to be taken into consideration when formulating the strategies. The gender strategies must be formulated with the main priority of assisting the empowerment of women and assisting them in their advancement (Ragins et al, 1998).

In order for Employment Equity and all the related initiatives such as succession planning to be successful, organizations need to implement these strategies organization-wide and not

limit them to certain departments within the organization. They should also be implemented at all levels (Booyesen, 1999a).

Below are some of the strategies organizations can utilize to assist and develop the female workforce. However none of these initiatives and strategies will be successful unless the following is adhered to (Booyesen, 1999a):

- Senior and top management support these initiatives
- Budget has been allocated to these strategies
- Gender targets are set
- Performance and development are managed

Women are constantly looking for new and innovative ways to adapt to the workplace so that these barriers are overcome. The various strategies that can be utilized to empower women in the workplace will now be examined.

### **2.8.1 ADAPTING TO THE WORKPLACE**

Consistently exceeding performance expectations was the top ranking strategy used by successful senior executives (Ragins et al, 1998; Gazso, 2004). Working long hours and developing unique skills and expertise are some of the other tactics that were also used. Taking work home, waking up early before the children to ensure that reading can be done and doing homework before going into a meeting are some of the things that women have to do to ensure that they are perceived to be on a par with their male colleagues (Ragins et al, 1998). Wrigley (2002) argues that working hard does not always work but if you want to get ahead of the pack you have to know and understand the corporate politics.

Women also face the daunting challenge of ensuring that their management style is not masculine or too feminine. They have to ensure that they have a management style that is acceptable to their male colleagues, supervisors and subordinates. Women have to find an appropriate style that will not threaten their male peers or make them uncomfortable (Ragins et al, 1998).

However Gazso (2004) argues that in order to break through the gender barriers and thereafter keep the doors opened in the gendered work culture means women not functioning in a similar manner to men but also acting like men. Women become more aggressive and competitive in the workplace and they also try to be “one of the boys”. As a result women in senior management positions resemble men in their personality and behaviour characteristics (Van Vianen & Fischer, 2002).

### **2.8.2 MENTORING**

Mentoring plays an important and critical role in career advancement. Vinnicombe & Singh (2003) states that mentors can play various roles including career advisor, counselor, friend, coach on management techniques and advocate. Protégés value their mentor’s way of helping them to think through what they want to do instead of telling them and also aligning their thinking within the strategic context of the organization. Mentors also assist women in developing their managerial identity.

Individuals who have a mentor are likely to receive more promotions, have more career mobility and advance at a faster rate than those that lack a mentor (Ragins et al, 1998; Nicholson, 1996). Mentors that are part of old boy networks can provide valuable information and contacts to their female protégés and can facilitate access to membership for their protégés (Vinnicombe & Singh, 2003).

However there is a serious shortage of female mentors (Nicholson, 1996; Ragins et al, 1998). It has nonetheless been proven that same sex mentors are beneficial for the individual and the organization (Nicolson, 1996). If the number of female role models are increased this will ensure feminine management styles are more acceptable in the workplace (Vinnicombe & Singh, 2002). Initiatives must therefore be taken increase the pool of female mentors.

As a result of the limited number of female mentors, male mentors are being chosen. Male mentors are more influential and can provide greater access to inner power circles while female mentors will be able to identify and empathize with the barriers faced by women (Ragins et al, 1998).

In the South African context further obstacle arise with respect to mentoring. White managers show a high level of 'social identity anxiety' due their loss of power and is therefore not always willing to mentor blacks as the white manager feel threatened that he will lose his job when the black person is trained. There are also no incentives for the white employee to perform this skills transfer (Booyesen, 2005)

Although mentoring has been proven to be very effective, the lack of female mentors and the reluctance of white managers to train black managers have to be overcome prior to the benefits of mentoring being experienced.

### **2.8.3 SUCCESSION PLANNING**

Succession planning for women employees can be achieved by assisting women to overcome their lack of confidence. This will improve the number of women in various employment categories. Companies should be encouraged to introduce development career planning for both managerial and non-managerial women. These plans should include development, career planning, workplace culture and flexible working arrangements (Van der Colff & Van Scheers, 2004).

### **2.8.4 TRAINING AND EDUCATION**

It is the woman's responsibility to ensure that she takes the necessary steps to overcome the deficiencies in her attributes. Hence a group of women who completed their MBA's were analyzed to determine if this qualification had any effect on some of the barriers. The results of this study proved that men moved into senior positions much faster than females. Men are also likely to earn higher salaries after the MBA compared to that of female

counterparts. Women are most likely to leave the organization for a promotion due to barriers encountered whereas men will be promoted within the company (Simpson, 1997).

Training and development must be based on developing skills for the new economy – that is thinking of the future. This training must not only teach women how to think about business but also how to manage business practically (Simpson, 1997). Management development programmes could also assist women to cope with the problems with their jobs (Veale & Gold, 1998).

Smith (2002) states human capital investments are vitally important for ushering females into positions of authority (Smith, 2002). Therefore corporate organizations need to invest in training and development and inculcate a culture of lifelong learning.

### **2.8.5 NETWORKING**

Increased visibility, engaging in more networking, working on a significant project and making an impact are some of the initiatives females need to take to increase their chances of being promoted (Liff & Ward, 2001). Having an early opportunity to work close to senior people can give future female managers access to a network of influential contacts. These contacts can expose young managers to how an organization operates both on a formal and informal basis, thus providing valuable business insight. Visibility is a key to more challenging and higher profile jobs and inevitably opens the doors to many future opportunities (Vinnicombe & Singh, 2003).

Networking amongst women could assist women in their career development as their peers can provide them with support and guidance and hence breakdown the isolation they feel. The learning experiences of the senior individuals could also guide the younger managers (Veale & Gold, 1998).

Women need to think more strategically when developing their circle of influence as these associates can play a pivotal role in their advancement and success (Volpe & Nicholson, 2004).

#### **2.8.6 FAMILY SUPPORT**

The relationship a female manager has with her partner plays a vital role in her career development and stress levels (Veale & Gold, 1998). A supportive partner and family will assist a female manager in balancing the demands of full-time work and child care. It is important for women to understand that their dual roles need to be managed.

As more men share in family and home responsibilities and more children are raised by women who have professional lives, gender role socialization will shift to a more androgynous process where boys and girls are equally introduced to possibilities of their roles in societies (Wrigley, 2002).

#### **2.8.7 CHALLENGING ASSIGNMENTS**

In order for women to be given the required recognition they have opted to take on highly visible assignments. These assignments will provide them with professional growth and learning challenges, serve as grooming exercise for succession planning and also give them exposure to key decision makers and influential mentors in the company. These challenging assignments also assisted women in expanding and challenging their abilities and to realizing their full potential. These assignments gave the protégés confidence in their ability as well as increased their visibility to a wider range of senior managers. Unlike male counterparts who are offered key assignment women have to convince management that they are ready and able to take on these assignments (Ragins et al, 1998; Vinnicombe & Singh, 2003).

### **2.8.8 FAMILY FRIENDLY POLICIES**

Flexible work arrangements could assist women in overcoming the many obstacles they encounter at work. Some of these arrangements include flexible working hours, after school clubs and after care facility (Veale & Gold, 1998). Organizations need to develop more flexible practices such as maternity and paternity leave and flexible working hours. These family friendly policies will only assist women in reaching their maximum potential in the workplace (Vinnicombe & Singh, 2003).

## **2.9 CONCLUSION**

Internationally and in South Africa the representation of females in senior management positions still has much room for improvement. Organization needs to realize that diversity should be seen as a great opportunity to be encouraged and nurtured. The long term sustainability of a company will be dependent on whether a comprehensive diversity strategy has been implemented throughout the organizations.

The organizational culture can be considered as the soul of the organization and can therefore easily be a hurdle to the development of women in the workplace. Gender role socialization results in gender stereotypes that are also likely to raise strong attitudinal and perceptual barriers to women's advancement. These and many other barriers in the workplace are preventing women from succeeding.

Nevertheless the nurturing and caring leadership style that is more suitable to a female will assist organizations in creating a culture of team collaboration and will be beneficial to an organization. The many gender strategies that companies engage in can only be successful if they are committed in its implementation.

After the elaborate discussion of the literature review the focus will now be on the research methodology and research results. To reiterate the aim of the research is to determine the barriers that females encounter in the workplace, impact of gender of gender targets and

effectiveness of gender strategies. Thereafter an analysis will be performed to determine if the literature and theory review concur with the research results and also if new research findings can be determined. The research methodology and design of this study will now be discussed.

## **3 CHAPTER**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter provides a description of the research design and methodology. The rationale for the methods is described and validated. An explanation of the sample design, data collection method, data preparation and data analysis plan is described in detail in this chapter. Primary data has been obtained via the electronic questionnaire that was forwarded to respondents in the Eastern Region. An in-depth case study on Eskom (Chapter 4) has been provided as secondary data. Finally the problems encountered with the data collection instrument and sample surveyed are discussed.

#### **3.2 BACKGROUND TO RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This is a cross-sectional study aimed at gathering primary data which will form a basis for extrapolating conclusions about the larger population. The primary data will be extracted by utilizing an electronic questionnaire.

The nature of this research is exploratory and predominantly descriptive. Exploratory studies assist researchers to develop concepts more clearly, establish priorities, develop operational definitions and improve final research design. It also assists in developing new hypotheses regarding gender equality. This is a descriptive study because it tries to determine the organizational barriers that are affecting women and what strategies are in place to overcome these barriers (Mouton, 2001; Cooper & Schindler, 2003).

The study has an ex-post facto design where the researcher is unable to manipulate the variables in the study and thus is unable to introduce bias. The researcher is limited to

holding factors constant by judicious selection of subjects according to strict sampling procedures and by statistical manipulation of findings (Cooper & Schindler, 2003).

### **3.2.1 RESEARCH PROBLEMS**

The main aim of the research is to determine the barriers that are preventing females in management levels from advancing and entering into jobs that were previously male dominated. As a result of these barriers some organizations have engaged strategies to overcome these problems. The effectiveness of these strategies will be examined. A further aim of this research is to determine the impact that gender equity target setting has on male employees.

### **3.2.2 SECONDARY DATA**

Secondary sources of data have been reviewed. These data sources includes Eskom's policies and procedures relating to gender equity, recruitment , it's family friendly policies and also Eskom's gender equity statistics. The Employment Equity Report submitted to the Commissioner of Employment Equity has also been scrutinized and analyzed. An in-depth case study of Eskom is covered in chapter 4.

### **3.2.3 PRIMARY DATA**

Primary data has been accumulated from the questionnaire that was sent out to managers in the Eastern Region. The questionnaire is further explained below.

### 3.3 POPULATION, SAMPLE FRAME, SAMPLING AND SAMPLE SIZE

#### 3.3.1 POPULATION

Eskom Holdings Limited is a vertically integrated company that transmits, generates and distributes electricity. The background of Eskom has been alluded to in Chapter 4. The population of Eskom consists of 29890 (Table 4.2) employees from various divisions. The prime focus of this research is based on employees in management positions, which comprises of a population of 15273 (Table 3.1) employees. Males constitute 72% of the management population.

Table 3.1 Employees in management position in Eskom

	Race	Top Mgt	Senior Mgt	Middle Mgt	Junior Mgt	Total	% Race
Male	African	9	47	583	3198	3837	35%
	Coloured	1	5	151	652	809	7%
	Indian	2	38	251	372	663	6%
	White	3	130	1360	4207	5700	52%
	Total	15	220	2345	8429	11009	100%
	% Level	0%	2%	21%	77%	100%	
Female	African	2	24	257	1788	2071	49%
	Coloured	0	5	61	309	375	9%
	Indian	0	8	84	194	286	7%
	White	0	21	237	1274	1532	36%
	Total	2	58	639	3565	4264	
	%	0%	1%	15%	84%	100%	
		17	278	2984	11994	15273	

Amongst the female managers the population is split between Africans (49%), whites (36%), Coloureds (9%) and Indians (7%). The males consist of Africans (35%), Whites (52%), Coloureds (7%) and Indians (6%). The management levels include junior, middle and senior management. Junior management as per the Paterson grading system includes C uppers (CU's and PA0's); this level is also characterized as the supervisory level in Eskom. Middle management includes Management and Professional (M Band and PPG) managers and M upper and PU managers. The P band designation indicates that the manager is a specialist

and he or she does not have any staff reporting to him. Senior managers consist of Executive managers (E band managers) who are the Regional Electrification Manager, Regional Customer Services Manager, Regional Finance Manager, Regional Engineering Manager and the General Manager for the Region. Females are predominately found in junior management level, followed by middle management and then senior management.

### **3.3.2 SAMPLE FRAME, SAMPLING AND SAMPLE SIZE**

The main focus of this research is on the Distribution business within Eskom Holdings which consists of 14707 employees. Distribution comprises the bulk of employees compared to the various other divisions within Eskom Holdings Ltd. The Distribution business is currently split into six regions. The researcher has conducted the study on employees in management positions within the Eastern Region only. Eastern Region has a staff complement of 2512 employees. The sample utilized for this research consisted of the managers of the region only. The Eastern region management sample represents 4% of Eskom's management population. The actual respondents who participated in the study were 157 respondents which is a 1% representation of the population.

A probability sampling method was used. The population was divided into the following strata: gender (male and female), hierarchical level (junior, middle and senior management) race (African, White, Indian and Coloured) and Departments (Customer Services, Finance, Engineering, Information Management, Commercial Services and Human Resources). Stratification is a statistically efficient method as each stratum is homogenous internally and heterogeneous with other strata (Cooper & Schindler, 2003). The data for the sample was obtained from the Human Resources department.

The target sample is depicted in Table 3.2. The total number of respondents targeted was 554 employees, which comprises junior management (CU and PA0), middle management (M & PPG, MU & PU) and senior management (E band). The number of females comprises 26% of the sample. Junior management had the biggest representation in the sample which, if further broken down, is represented by 22% females and 58% males. Middle

management comprised 19% of the sample and is split into 3% female and 16% male. Senior management had the lowest representation as there are only 5 senior managers in the region. Two of the senior managers are female and three are male.

Table 3.2 Analysis of sample by Gender and Grade

MANGRADE	FEMALE	PERCENTAGE	MALE	PERCENTAGE	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
CCU	115	21%	286	52%	401	72%
PA0	8	1%	34	6%	42	8%
<b>JUNIOR MGT</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>443</b>	<b>80%</b>
MMM	12	2%	46	8%	58	10%
PPG	6	1%	27	5%	33	6%
MMU	0	0%	11	2%	11	2%
PPU	1	0%	3	1%	4	1%
<b>MIDDLE MGT</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>19%</b>
E	2	0%	3	1%	5	1%
<b>SENIOR MGT</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>410</b>	<b>74%</b>	<b>554</b>	<b>100%</b>

The sample is also representative of the four race groups (Table 3.3) namely African, Indian, Coloured and White. Amongst the females Africans have the majority representation of 51%, Whites (24%), Indian (20%) and Coloured (5%). White males constitute 43% of the sample, followed by African male (31%), Indian male (24%) and Coloured male (2%).

Table 3.3 Analysis of sample by Gender and Race

RACE	FEMALE	PERCENTAGE	MALE	PERCENTAGE	TOTAL
African	73	51%	126	31%	199
Indian	30	20%	99	24%	129
Coloured	7	5%	8	2%	15
White	34	24%	177	43%	211
Grand Total	144	100%	410	100%	554

The sample is also representative of the various departments within the Eastern region (Table 3.4). The various departments of a distribution business comprise Human

Resources, Finance, Customer Services, Information Management, Engineering and Commercial Services departments.

Although Engineering being the core department within Eskom and comprising 55% of the sample, women only have a 6% representation as compared to 49% representation by their male counterparts. This disparity between male and females is most prominent in Engineering than any other department. Most departments have an equal representation of males and females.

Table 3.4 Analysis of sample by Department

DEPARTMENT	FEMALE	PERCENTAGE	MALE	PERCENTAGE	TOTAL
Commercial	16	11%	17	4%	33
Customer Services	37	26%	57	14%	94
Engineering	35	24%	272	66%	307
Finance	21	15%	23	6%	44
General Manager	1	1%	0		1
Human Resources	22	15%	30	7%	52
Information Management	12	8%	11	3%	23
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>410</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>554</b>

### 3.4 DATA COLLECTION METHODS, TECHNIQUES AND PROCEDURES

Quantitative data has been gathered by conducting an electronic survey. The electronic questionnaire was forwarded to a target sample of 554 male and female managers in the Eastern Region.

### 3.4.1 DESIGN OF THE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

The measurement instrument was formulated by the researcher and comprised 49 target and classification questions. An abridged version of the questionnaire is depicted in Table 3.5 and the detailed questionnaire is included in Appendix A.

Table 3.5 Summary of Questions

QUESTION NO	DETAIL OF QUESTION	DIMENSION
1	Race	Demographic information
2	Grade	Demographic information
3	Gender	Demographic information
4	Marital Status	Demographic information
5	Do you have children?	Demographic information
6	If yes, number of children	Demographic information
7	Are you a member of the Women Development Forum?	Demographic information
8	Highest formal qualification	Demographic information
9	No of years of experience	Demographic information
10	Department	Demographic information
11	The organization culture is supportive	Barriers
12	Gender stereotyping	Barriers
13	After care facility	Barriers
14	Eskom is supportive to women	Barriers
15	Linking family commitments to promotions	Barriers
16	Women not exposed to challenging assignments	Barriers
17	Skill & experience is a barrier	Barriers
18	Senior management is not supportive	Barriers
19	Men are supportive of women in senior positions	Barriers
20	Women not supporting other women	Barriers
21	Women support other women in higher bands.	Barriers
25	No suitable mentors	Barriers
26	Networking amongst women	Barriers
28	Networking amongst women	Barriers
29	Women are not willing to take on new opportunities and challenges	Barriers
34	Women lack the skill and experience	Barriers
35	Men accepting women as their supervisor	Barriers
40	Networking amongst men	Barriers
42	Promotion opportunities greater for men than women	Barriers
43	Leadership skills of women vs. men	Barriers
44	Women's place is at home	Barriers
46	Division of labour	Barriers

47	Family inhibits career progression	Barriers
22	Do you have a mentor?	GE Strategy
23	Gender of mentor	GE Strategy
24	Mentors	GE Strategy
27	Effectiveness of Women Development Forum	GE Strategy
30	Eskom's flexible work practices	GE Strategy
31	Flexible work practices effectiveness	GE Strategy
32	Lack of training for women	GE Strategy
33	Leadership style of women	GE Strategy
45	Women are as successful as men	GE Strategy
48	Succession Planning	GE Strategy
36	Gender equity has negatively impacted male morale	Male morale
37	Competency of women	Male morale
38	Gender Equity appointees are token appointments	Male morale
39	Increased tension between men and women	Male morale
41	Organization culture supports diversity	Male morale
49	Any feedback regarding gender equity	Open Question

Classification questions were utilized to determine demographic information of the respondents. The 10 classification questions included questions regarding race, gender, grade, no of years of experience in current position, qualification of respondent; department and no of children.

Target questions were used in the instrument to determine information regarding the research question. The 38 target questions were structured and the unstructured open ended question was the final question where the respondents were requested to share their thoughts regarding gender equality. The target questions were grouped into 3 dimensions namely barriers, gender equity strategies and impact of target settings on male managers. The research data were analyzed into these subgroups.

The target questions were aimed at determining the respondent's opinions on the various barriers selected by the researcher and also whether they believed the strategies to overcome these barriers were effective. Questions were also targeted at men and women to determine their opinion regarding target setting.

The questionnaire was created in Excel and was programmed to link the respondent's answers to a separate answer sheet. The Likert scale was utilized and this was also pre-coded, for example a 'strongly disagree' was coded as a 1 and a 'disagree' coded as a 2 and so forth. When a respondent made a choice between one of categories the answer was linked to be transferred to the answer sheet. The answer worksheet was of great assistance to the researcher in reducing the time to code the responses and also reducing the number of errors when coding and transferring data.

The reason that electronic questionnaire was selected is discussed below.

### **3.4.2 STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF ELECTRONIC QUESTIONNAIRE**

The main aim of a survey is to provide a broad overview of a representative sample of a large population (Mouton, 2001). The main reason that an electronic administered survey was chosen is due to the ability to easily make contact with a geographically dispersed population as the sample comprised of people that was geographically dispersed throughout Kwazulu Natal. This method is also cost-efficient because it is a one-person job and also saves costs as it eliminates the costs of printing surveys and postage. The other advantage of this method is that electronic surveys allow respondents to think about their response and allowed them to complete the survey when it was convenient for them. This method is also perceived as more anonymous and also eliminates interviewer bias (Cooper & Schindler, 2003; Anderson, 2004).

Some of the disadvantages of this method include not being able to obtain large amounts of information as probing is not possible, the high non-response rate, late returns, incomplete responses and limited control over respondents responses (Cooper & Schindler, 2003; Anderson, 2004).

### 3.5 RELIABILITY

The reliability of the measuring instrument has been verified by conducting a pilot test. Reliability refers to measuring the accuracy of the instrument being used (Coopers and Schindler, 2003). The questionnaire was pilot tested in the Cash Management Department. The pilot sample comprised 11 employees of different grade and gender. As a result of the pilot testing the following amendments were made:

- The wording of the questionnaire was altered to remove ambiguity
- the alternatives offered for the demographic questions were amended as they did not cover all the alternatives
- coding of the Likert scale had to be corrected

The length of time (10 minutes) required to complete the questionnaire was also tested and was acceptable to the pilot sample.

The Cronbach's coefficient alpha has also been used to determine the reliability of the questionnaire and is discussed in detail in Chapter 5.

### 3.6 DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

The questionnaires were e-mailed together with an introductory letter which gave the respondent background knowledge into the survey and also assuring the respondent that the information gathered would be treated confidentially. Respondents were requested to complete the questionnaire and return to the researcher.

The questionnaire was sent out to all managers with a deadline date of 10 days from the date the questionnaire was e-mailed. Three days prior to the deadline date a further reminder was sent out to the employees from the sample. This resulted in an increase in the number of responses received. As a consequence of this initiative the total number of respondents that completed the questionnaire was 157 employees.

### 3.7 DATA PREPARATION AND ANALYSIS PLAN

“Quantitative data has no value in its raw state” (Anderson, 2004). Once all quantitative data was gathered it had to be organized and analyzed. Analysis involves breaking up the data into manageable themes, pattern, trends and relationships. The aim of the analysis is to understand the relationships between concepts and variables and to determine whether there are any patterns or trends so that themes can be established in the data (Mouton, 2001).

The pre-coded data answer sheet received from all respondents was combined to create a database of the respondents. The open-ended question was not coded but included in the results chapter verbatim. The statistical package utilized for the analysis was SPSS. A staff member at the Statistics Department at the University of KwaZulu Natal assisted with the data analysis.

Exploratory data analysis technique (chapter 5) was utilized to analyze the quantitative data. A major contribution of an exploratory approach is its emphasis on visual representation and graphical techniques. Some of the techniques that were utilized to analyze the data were frequency tables, pie charts, line graphs and bar charts.

The statistical analysis of the data assisted in determining significant differences between men and women. The two statistical methods utilized were chi-squares and t-tests. Chi-square was used to determine if the difference in frequencies between males and females responses were significant whereas t-tests utilized the mean results of males and females to determine significant differences.

## 3.8 LIMITATIONS

### 3.8.1 LIMITATIONS OF SAMPLING METHOD

As mentioned already the sample was limited to the Eastern Region only. It may be difficult to extrapolate Eastern Regions results to the other regions as they may have their own unique problems.

### 3.8.2 LIMITATIONS OF DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

The following specific problems were identified when the analysis of the data was conducted:

i. Question 9 – Number of years of experience

The question on the number of years of experiences was poorly phrased. This question required the respondent to identify the number of years of experience he/she had in the current position. By limiting the question to current position the question does not take into account the number of years of experience the respondent had in different jobs but on the same grade.

ii. Question 17 and 34 - Women lacking the skill and experience

These questions are similar as they are trying to determine if one of the reasons for a lack of senior female managers is due to women not having sufficient skill and experience. The questionnaire should have been thoroughly scrutinized for duplications prior to distribution.

These problems were unfortunately not identified when the pilot study was performed.

The secondary data will now be examined, which is an in-depth case study of Eskom and its policies and procedures relating to the empowerment of women in the workplace. The gender equity statistics of Eskom will also be scrutinized.

## **4 CHAPTER**

### **ESKOM HOLDINGS LTD**

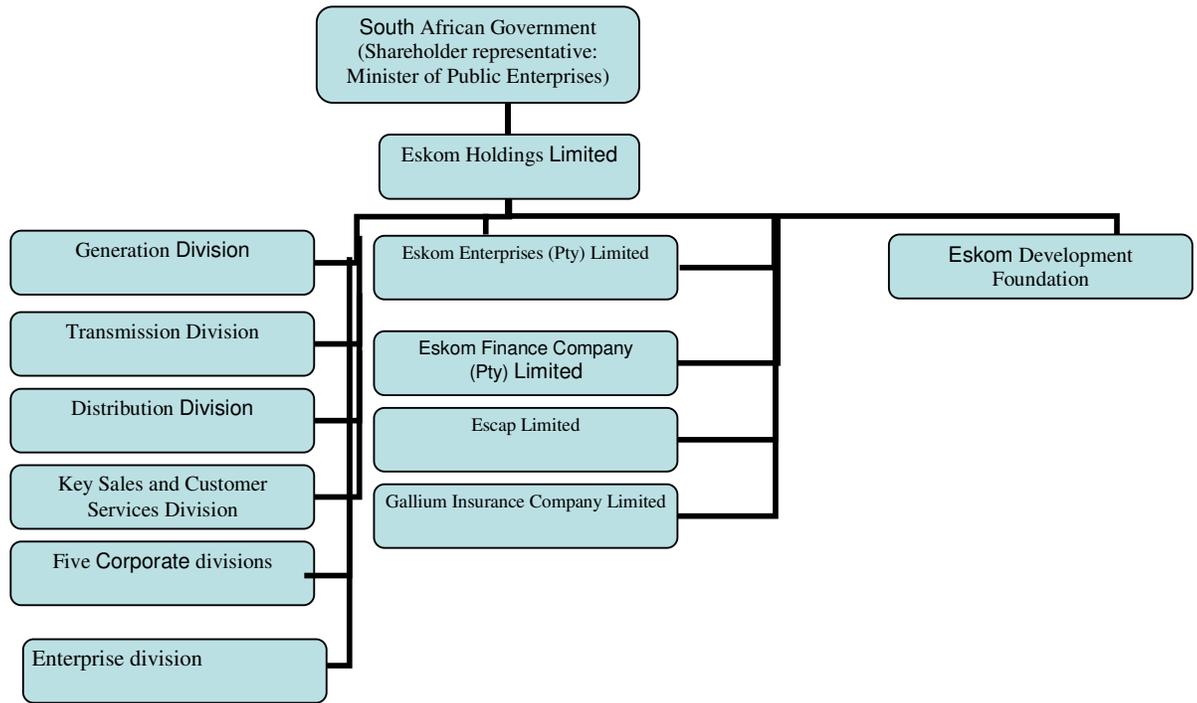
#### **4.1 BACKGROUND OF ESKOM**

From its beginnings in 1923, Eskom has made significant progress in terms of its financial, economic, social and environmental performance. On 1<sup>st</sup> July 2002 Eskom was converted to a private company namely, Eskom Holdings Limited .The incorporation was an intrinsic part of Eskom to be more transparent which is in line with corporate governance and the global trend. The South African Government is the sole shareholder of Eskom Holdings Limited and is represented by the Minister of Public Enterprises.

Eskom Holding Limited (Eskom) is a vertically integrated company that generates, transmits and distributes electricity. The organizational structure (Figure 4.1) gives a broad overview of Eskom. Eskom is regulated by the National Electricity Regulator (NER) in terms of the Electricity Act, 41 of 1987 and the National Nuclear Regulator in terms of the National Regulatory Act, 47 of 1999.

Eskom is among the top eleven utilities in the world in terms of generation capacity and among the top seven in terms of sales. Eskom also generates 50% of the electricity on the African continent and approximately 95% of the electricity in South Africa. As Reul Khoza, Chairman of Eskom Holdings Limited sums up Eskom's challenges for the future on the release of Eskom's 2003 business results, "Political change in South Africa in a marriage with economic change is now giving birth to several changes in our social environment."

Figure 4.1: Organization Structure of Eskom



Adapted from Eskom 2005 Annual report (2005:3)

## 4.2 PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY TO ESKOM

Eskom has many future challenges that it has to overcome. One of the major challenges is that the current generation capacity of Eskom will be insufficient to meet the future needs of their customers. Additional power stations have to be constructed and existing capacity needs to be maximized to ensure that future capacity is not compromised. This expansion initiative will provide significant opportunities to the career development of females in Eskom. A skilled pool of engineers, designers, project managers and planners will be an asset to Eskom as they move forward with this initiative. A dynamic and innovative team is required to meet Eskom's skill shortage.

The distribution business is in the process of undergoing transformational changes which is a further challenge for Eskom. The change will result in the deregulation of the electricity

industry with the aim of introducing competition and increasing efficiency. Currently Eskom distributes electricity to the municipalities, who then redistribute this electricity to consumers. The aim of the restructuring is to merge Eskom Distribution with the Municipalities and ultimately forming six Regional Electricity Distributors (REDS). This initiative will result in many international electricity distributors attempting to enter the South African electricity market. As part of its many initiatives Eskom needs to align its gender equity plans to international standards to ensure that it has a competitive edge over its international rivals. One can conclude that it is an appropriate time for this study to be performed. This study will assist Eskom in identifying threats that prevent gender diversity to prosper and at the same time will identify opportunities that will assist it in fostering a 'gender friendly environment.'

Eskom has a diverse culture of gender, ethnic groups and race. In order to be competitive and sustainable into the future the management and effectiveness of this multi-cultural group will be crucial to its success. Many benefits can be gained from this diverse group provided that their energies are correctly channelled and a mutual understanding of collaboration and teamwork is fostered.

Eskom has many policies and guidelines governing gender equity. This study will assess if these policies are being implemented effectively. It will also look at the perception of males and females and their opinion regarding Eskom gender equity programs. Eskom is strictly monitored to ensure it is able to meet gender equity quotas set up by the members of the Executive Committee. This study will ascertain the negative impact quotas have on females and male employees if they are not implemented effectively.

#### 4.3 GENDER EQUITY STATISTICS IN ESKOM

Eskom aims to create an environment that fosters diversity, "a culture comfortable for all, where diversity is valued , managed and integrated into the mainstream of business life to ensure the attraction and retention of diverse talents" (Ruel Khoza: Annual Report 2005).

Eskom currently employs 29890 employees and therefore has a huge task at hand in managing this diverse group.

Eskom has supported the objectives of the Employment Equity Act since 1994 and acknowledges that there is a legacy of inequalities in the workplace in access to employment, training and development, and career advancement of blacks, women and people with disabilities. Therefore Eskom has formulated an Employment Equity policy (2002) to address these inequalities and to ensure a demographic representation of designated groups at all occupational levels and categories. Management is held accountable for achieving gender equity targets.

The main objectives of Eskom Employment Equity policy (2002) are:

- Identifying and removing unfair discriminatory practices
- Setting targets to ensure representation of designated groups
- Preferential recruitment of blacks, women and people with disabilities
- Training and developing designated employees
- Creating a favourable environment for designated employees

Eskom has made a concerted effort to improving its gender equity statistics and implementing its employment equity policy as is portrayed in Table 4.1. The table reveals the percentage of women in management levels from 1994 to 2005. In 1994 the number of women in senior positions was a mere 10%. Much effort and energy has been invested to improve these statistics to the current 28.9% which is a 189% improvement in just 10 years.

Table 4.1: Women in Managerial Level in Eskom (1994-2005)

<b>Financial Year</b>	<b>Dec 1994</b>	<b>Dec 1999</b>	<b>Dec 2000</b>	<b>Dec 2001</b>	<b>Dec 2002</b>	<b>Dec 2003</b>	<b>March 2005</b>
Women in Managerial Level	10%	15.7%	18.4%	21.7%	24.5%	27.8%	28.9%

Adapted from Eskom Annual Financial Reports 2001, 2002, 2003, 2005 & Eskom News 2005

The 2005 BWA statistics revealed that Eskom Holdings Limited had 5 of its 13 (38%) directorships being held by women and 2 of its 15 (13.3%) executive manager positions were occupied by females.

Table 4.2 is an extract Employment Equity Report that was submitted by Eskom Holdings Ltd as at 30 August 2004 to the Department of Labour.

Table 4.2 Employment Equity Report – August 2004

Occupational Levels	Male				Female				TOTAL
	African	Coloured	Indian	White	African	Coloured	Indian	White	
<i>Top management</i>	9	1	2	3	2	0	0	0	<b>17</b>
Senior management	47	5	38	130	24	5	8	21	<b>278</b>
Professionally qualified and experienced specialists and mid-management	583	151	251	1360	257	61	84	237	<b>2984</b>
Skilled technical and academically qualified workers, junior management, supervisors, foremen, and superintendents	3198	652	372	4207	1788	309	194	1274	<b>11994</b>
<b>TOTAL FOR MANAGEMENT POSITIONS</b>	<b>3837</b>	<b>809</b>	<b>663</b>	<b>5700</b>	<b>2071</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>286</b>	<b>1532</b>	<b>15273</b>
Semi-skilled and discretionary decision making	7692	876	60	1093	869	178	91	956	<b>11815</b>
<b>TOTAL PERMANENT</b>	<b>13565</b>	<b>1861</b>	<b>725</b>	<b>6796</b>	<b>2996</b>	<b>556</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>2492</b>	<b>29371</b>
Non – permanent employees	168	26	11	81	188	14	10	21	<b>519</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13733</b>	<b>1887</b>	<b>736</b>	<b>6877</b>	<b>3184</b>	<b>570</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>2513</b>	<b>29890</b>

Adapted from Eskom Holdings Ltd Employment Equity Report - August 2004

As at the end of August 2004 Eskom Holdings Ltd had 29 890 employees of which 22% were females and 23233 78% were males. Of the 17 top management positions, 2 positions

were occupied by females. In the senior management category 58 of the 278 positions were female, a 21% representation of females and in the middle management category there were 639 (21%) women compared to 2345 men in middle management positions. This trend continues into the junior management category where women occupied (30%) of junior management positions. In all the above management positions white males have the highest representation thereafter followed by Black males, African females and White females.

The above statistics reveal that much emphasis has been placed on transforming Eskom from a male dominated environment into a representative corporate organization and as a result Eskom has many initiatives in place to assist in the emancipation of women in Eskom and in society at large.

## **4.4 ESKOM GENDER EQUITY STRATEGIES**

Eskom has engaged in many strategies and initiative to empower and build capacity in women in Eskom. These strategies will now be further examined.

### **4.4.1 SKILLS MANAGEMENT**

As a global player Eskom is concerned about attracting, retaining and motivating talented individuals. It has therefore adopted a skills management system known as Capability Trading System to identify and retain critical, core and scarce skills. This tool will assist Eskom in aligning the best possible skills with vacant and future positions. Employees will also stand to gain from this initiative as it exposes them to positions available and also highlights scarce skills in the business. This tool, if utilized effectively, could be of assistance in the empowerment of women in Eskom.

### **4.4.2 VISION E**

Vision E is a transformational leadership development programme which uses a blended approach to learning and developing the competencies of Eskom leaders at managerial and

professional levels, and embraces the concept of African leadership. This programme is an interactive and comprises of learning laboratories, case studies and mastery tests. This programme has been specifically tailored to include the culture of an African society which is lacking in many other training programmes. This tool is an excellent one in developing and exposing new managers to skills they require in succeeding as leaders.

#### **4.4.3 TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

Eskom is committed to the training and development of all employees. Formal training and development are encouraged where Eskom pays for training and development courses and encourage the utilization of at least 10 further study days per employee. Development is a prerequisite for all employees and is managed through their personal development plans job compacts. Eskom is a company that promotes continuous learning via its further studies programme and in-house training programmes. Diversity management training is conducted on an ongoing basis.

Eskom invests large amounts of resources in their employees (Table 4.3) as it believes that human capital is one of its vital assets. In 2002 Eskom invested 494 million in their employees and this cost increased to 654 million in 2005 which was a fifteen month financial year end. These costs include internal and external training courses, technical training, tertiary education and the attendance at conferences and seminars. Life-long learning is something that Eskom promotes and encourages.

Table 4.3: Training and Development costs in Eskom (2002-2005)

	<b>Dec 2002</b>	<b>Dec 2003</b>	<b>March 2005</b>
<b>Total training cost</b>	<b>494 million</b>	<b>505 million</b>	<b>654 million</b>
<b>Average cost per employee R'000</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>22</b>

Adapted from Eskom Annual Financial Reports 2003 & 2005

#### **4.4.4 CHIEF EXECUTIVE WOMEN GRADUATE PROGRAMME**

The Chief Executive's Women Graduate Programme was an initiative undertaken by the Chief Executive where women employees were given support to pursue additional qualifications. The rationale was that if women have a junior degree, they might not have the confidence and the knowledge to advance in their careers. Those who completed the programme were imbued with technical, business and social skills that equipped them for leadership roles in Eskom.

#### **4.4.5 HEALTH AND WELLNESS**

Eskom has a comprehensive health and wellness programme that consists of employee assistance, sports and recreation, biokinetics, spiritual wellness, occupational health and medicine, health education, travel medicine and expatriate health.

#### **4.4.6 EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME (EAP)**

Eskom's Health Services department provides professional counselling and referral services. Its main aim is to offer preventive and therapeutic interventions to employees who develop personal problems that impair or threaten their work performance. This department mainly deals with problems with substance abuse, personal and marital problems, mental health problems and work-related problems. This programme is a support tool that women can use which can assist them and enhance their performance. The principle of this policy is covered in the Employee Assistance Programme Guidelines (1999).

#### **4.4.7 WORK- LIFE BALANCE**

In order to assist women with the work-life balance Eskom has introduced The Flexible Work Practices Policy (2004) which allows employees three flexible work alternatives. The first option is the option of employees to adapt the hours they start and finish work provided that customer service and normal job output is maintained. The other option that is also available to employees is part-time work where a permanent employee works 5 hours

instead of 8 hours on a continuous basis. Telecommuting is the last option which allows employees to work from remote location and away from the office. Telecommuters may work from a virtual office or work from home. These flexible work practices give working mothers especially, more alternatives as they want to spend more time with their children.

#### **4.4.8 MENTORING AND COACHING**

Eskom has realized the importance of mentoring young professionals and has therefore introduced Mentorship training both to the protégé and the mentor. It has become compulsory for young professionals to have a mentor. A formal mentorship programme is entered into between the mentor and the protégé and this relationship is also guided by Eskom's policy on mentorship (2002).

#### **4.4.9 WOMEN DEVELOPMENT FORUMS – LEKGOTLA**

Women Development Forums commonly known as Lekgotla (getting together for a purpose) is encouraged in Eskom as these sessions give women an opportunity to network and exchange ideas. "Lekgotla is going to empower us to be successful and happy at home and at Work" Mpho Letlape, Human Resources Division managing director, Eskom News, March 2004:35.

### **4.5 CONCLUSION**

Although Eskom may have many initiatives and policies to assist women in their development and advancement, the effectiveness of these initiatives is questionable and will be examined in the research results (chapter 5). Policies are created to guide the business. However whether the policy is being implemented and resulting in the success that the spirit of the policy intended will be further scrutinized.

The analysis of the research results will be intensively examined in the next chapter.

## **5 CHAPTER**

### **RESEARCH RESULTS**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

The results of the electronic survey will now be investigated in detail. The response rate has been analyzed to determine reasons for non responses and thereafter a graphical representation and an analysis of the classifications questions was carried out. The target questions are divided into three dimensions namely gender barriers, impact of gender target setting and gender strategies. The data is analyzed by utilizing frequency tables and means. Differences between males and females are determined with the use of chi-square and t-tests.

#### **5.2 RESPONSE RATE**

Prior to calculating the response rate of the survey, the non response rate must be scrutinized.

The sample size comprised 554 employees in management positions in the Eastern Region. The reason for potential respondents not responding has been analyzed in Table 5.1. Of the 554 employees targeted, 8 employees were on leave, one manager refused to complete the questionnaire on the grounds of lack of confidence in the confidentiality of the survey and one manager's e-mail address was invalid.

Table 5.1 Non Responses

REASONS FOR NON RESPONSE	FEMALE	MALE	Grand Total
On leave	5	3	8
Refuse to complete questionnaire		1	1
E-mail address invalid		1	1
Grand Total	5	5	10

A total of 157 managers responded to the survey. The number of non responses was 10 and the sample size was 554 so effectively the response rate was 29% [ $157 / (554 - 10)$ ]. Cooper & Schindler (2003) considers this response rate to be satisfactory and in line with an average questionnaire response rate. A possible reason for this high non response rate is that only those people that feel strongly about gender equity in the workplace would have answered the questionnaire and also due to a large number of potential respondents who refuse to complete questionnaires (Coopers & Schindler, 2003).

### 5.3 ANALYSIS OF DEMOGRAPHICAL DATA

Of the 157 respondents who gave feedback 33% (52) were female. This is relative in relation to the sample size which comprised 26% female and to the population which comprised 28% female.

#### 5.3.1 ANALYSIS OF RACE AND GENDER

The respondents were further analyzed into race and gender in Table 5.2. The highest responses were received from Whites who constitute 41% and thereafter followed by Indians 28%, Africans 26% and Coloureds 5%.

Table 5.2 Analysis of Data into Gender and Race (n=157)

Race	Female	Percentage	Male	Percentage	Grand Total	Percentage
African	17	33%	24	23%	41	26%
Coloured	5	10%	3	3%	8	5%
Indian	11	21%	33	31%	44	28%
White	19	36%	45	43%	64	41%
Grand Total	52	100%	105	100%	157	100%

Figure 5.1 Analyses of Female Respondents by Race

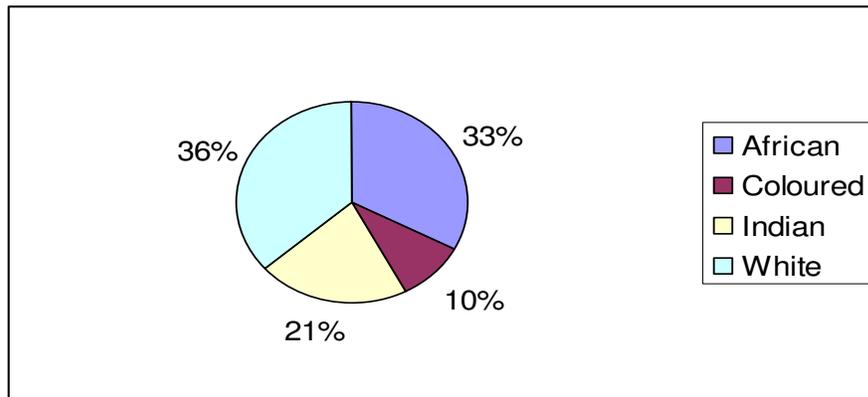


Figure 5.1 and 5.2 further analyzes race per gender. Amongst the females white females comprises 36% (Figure 5.1), the highest response rate, followed by African females 33%, Indian females 21% and Coloured females 10%. In comparison to the female population (Table 3.1) the largest representations were from African females 49%, Whites 36%, Coloureds 9% and Indians 7%. A probable reason for a higher response rate for white females was due to them feeling disadvantaged from the current gender equity stance. A higher response from Indian females is as result of the demographics of the region, which has a higher representation of Indians, compared to the other regions. Both these race groups feel strongly that gender equality is not beneficial to them which are revealed in some of the comments received:

*"I believe that White women are still disadvantaged in Distribution even with the Employment Equity Act as Black females are still given first preference in all cases. ALL*

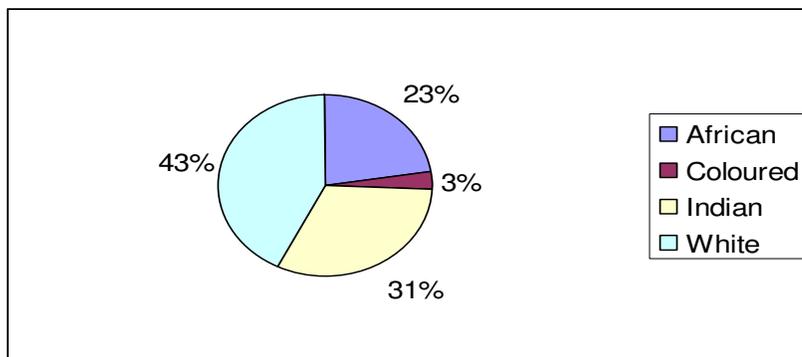
women were previously disadvantaged in the corporate world. Why must White women still be disadvantaged now with respect to senior positions? In the Region there is 1 white female in an M/P position”, White female.

“My stance is that Eskom is BEE & BWO oriented and there is no room for growth for Indian male & females”, Indian female.

“There are no opportunities for talented Indian women in this organization. Jobs are reserved and earmarked for black females, although all women were disadvantaged. I feel the right person should be chosen for the job”, Indian female

Figure 5.2 represents the males divided into the various race groups. The highest respondents were white males 43%, thereafter Indian males 31%, African males 23% and Coloured males 3%. In both categories, Coloured has had the lowest representation amongst the females 10% and males 3%. In comparison to the population (Table 3.1), white male managers had a 52% representation, followed on by black males 35%, Coloured managers 7% and Indian managers 6%. Indian males had a higher response rate compared to the population this is due to the demographics of the region as explained previously.

Figure 5.2 Analyses of Male Respondents by Race



### 5.3.2 ANALYSIS OF GENDER AND GRADE

Junior management (Table 5.3 and Figure 5.3) make up 80% of the data and this is aligned to the sample analysis where junior management formed 80% and to the population where junior management comprises 79%. Middle management forms 19% of the data and senior management comprises 1% of the data. This information is aligned to the sample where middle management constituted 19% and senior management 1% of the sample and to the population where middle management comprises 20% of the population. Therefore, the data is reflective of the sample and population and has not been skewed.

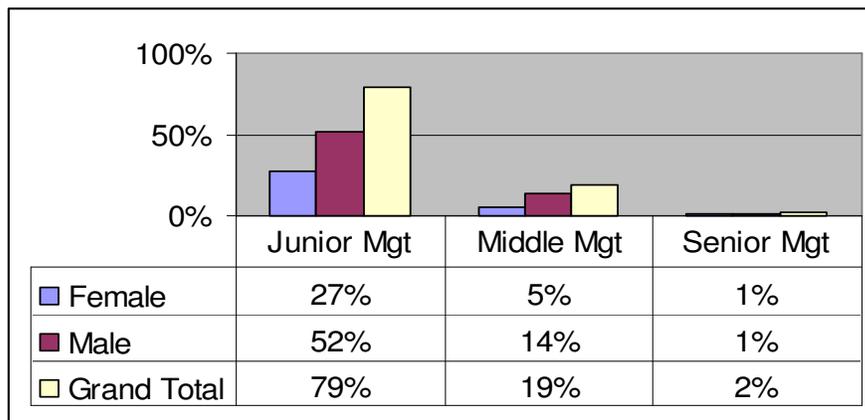
Amongst the females 82% are in junior management positions, 16% in middle management positions and 2% in senior management positions. In comparison males have 77% representation in junior management, 22% in middle management and 2% in senior management. In both junior and middle management, males have a slightly higher representation and in the senior management, there is equal representation from males and females.

Table 5.3 Analysis of Gender and Grade (n=157)

MANGRADE	FEMALE	FREQUENCY	MALE	FREQUENCY	Grand Total	PERCENTAGE
CU	42	80%	76	72%	118	75%
P Band	1	2%	5	5%	6	4%
<b>Junior Mgt</b>	43	82%	81	77%	124	79%
M Band	3	6%	10	10%	13	8%
PPG	5	10%	8	7%	13	8%
MU	0	0%	4	4%	4	3%
<b>Middle Mgt</b>	8	16%	22	21%	30	19%
E Band	1	2%	2	2%	3	1%
<b>Senior Mgt</b>	1	2%	2	2%	3	2%
Grand Total	52	100%	105	100%	157	100%

Figure 5.3 reveals that males have higher representation at junior and middle management. This analysis also indicates that the majority of the females are found at junior management level.

Figure 5.3 Management levels analysis (n=157)



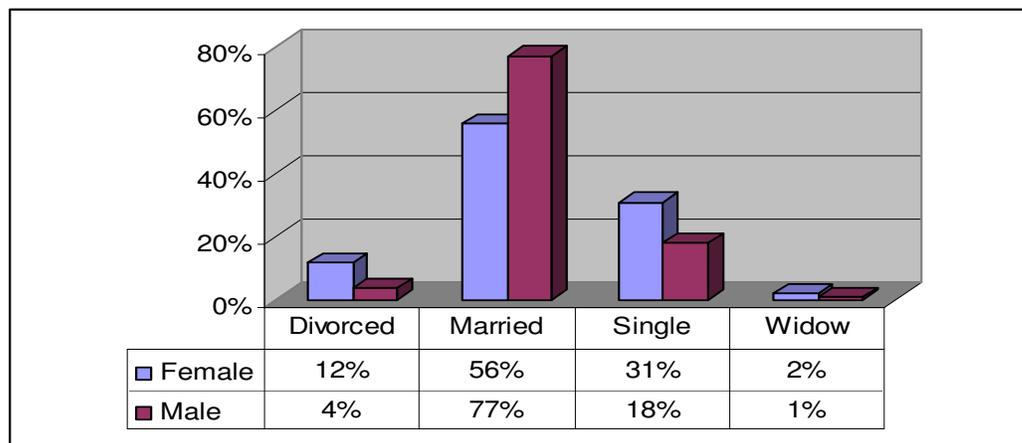
### 5.3.3 ANALYSIS BY GENDER AND MARITAL STATUS

The analysis of gender and marital status (Table 5.4 and Figure 5.4) indicates that the bulk of the respondents were married (70%). A higher number of males than females were married. Individuals that were married experienced the demands of dual roles, which was as a manager and thereafter as a parent and/or spouse. Amongst the females 12% were divorced which was made up of 5 junior managers and 1 senior manager, 55% were married comprising 22 junior managers and 7 middle managers, 31% single split between 15 junior managers and 1 middle manager, and 2% widowed which comprised a junior manager. The males comprises 4% divorced which were made up of 3 junior managers and 1 middle manager; 77% married which comprises 60 junior managers, 19 middle managers, 2 senior managers; 18% single split between 17 junior managers and 2 middle managers; and 1% widowed which is a junior manager. The results confirm that a lower number of females are married compared to males in management positions and it also revealed a higher number of females than males were divorced.

Table 5.4 Analysis of Gender and Marital Status (n=157)

Gender	Marital Status	Junior Mgt	Middle Mgt	Senior Mgt	Grand Total	Percentage
Female	Divorced	5	0	1	6	12%
	Married	22	7		29	55%
	Single	15	1		16	31%
	Widow	1	0		1	2%
<b>Female Total</b>		<b>43</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100%</b>
Male	Divorced	3	1		4	4%
	Married	60	19	2	81	77%
	Single	17	2		19	18%
	Widow	1	0		1	1%
<b>Male Total</b>		<b>81</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>124</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>157</b>	

Figure 5.4 Analyses of Gender and Marital Status (n=157)



On the other hand 29% of the respondents were divorced, single or widowed. However these managers also have dual responsibilities as 46% of them also have children. This is reflected in Table 5.5. Amongst the managers that indicated they were divorced 60% were female. Both divorced men and women have children. Of the 35 managers that indicated they were single 10 have children and the two widows have children. This thus confirms that 132 managers have dual responsibilities and only 25 managers which are represented

equally between males and females have no dual responsibilities. A large proportion of the respondents would have experienced the demands of both work and a family life.

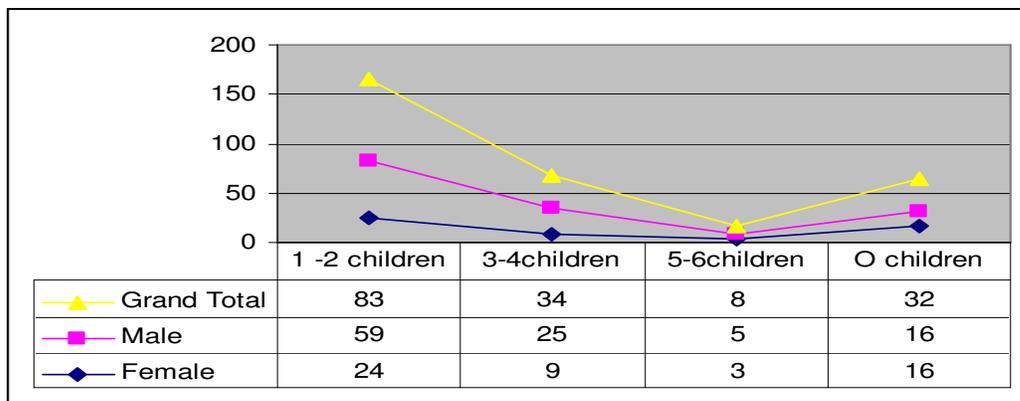
Table 5.5 Comparison between marital and parental status

	Divorced	Divorced Total	Single		Single Total	Widow	Widow Total	Grand Total
Have Children	Yes		No	Yes		Yes		
Female	6	6	12	4	16	1	1	23
Male	4	4	13	6	19	1	1	24
Grand Total	10	10	25	10	35	2	2	47

### 5.3.4 ANALYSIS OF GENDER AND NO OF CHILDREN

On average, the majority of 53% (83) managers (Figure 5.5) have between 1 and 2 children and 22% (34) managers have between 3 and 4 children.

Figure 5.5 Comparison of Gender and No of Children (n=157)



### 5.3.5 ANALYSIS OF GENDER AND QUALIFICATION

Education can assist females in progressing and advancing in the organization. The aim of this question was to determine the number of females and males that have acquired post matriculation qualification.

Amongst the female (Figure 5.6), 17% have no post matriculation qualification, 31% have diplomas, 27% degrees, 15% honours, 8% masters and 2% professionals. In comparison (Figure 5.7) only 10% of males have no post matriculation qualification, 49% diplomas, 25% degrees, 8% honours, 5% masters and 3% professionals.

Figure 5.6 Analysis of female qualification (n=52)

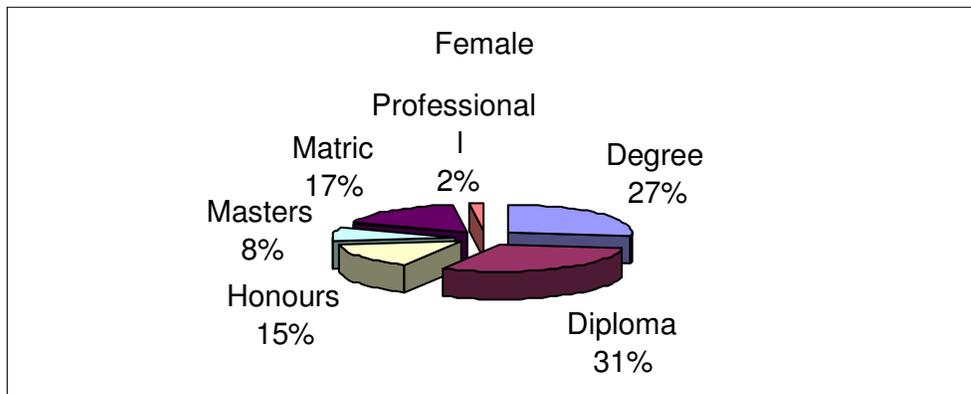
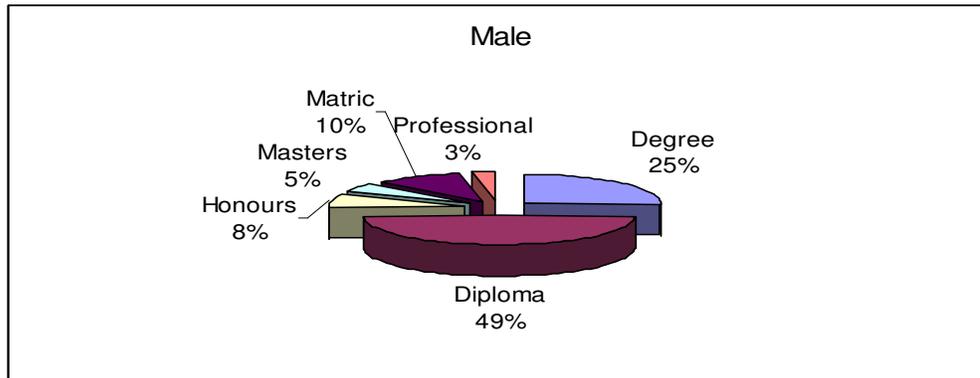


Figure 5.7 Analysis of Male Qualification (n=105)



In table 5.6, a comparison is made between qualification and management level. In the junior management level females had a higher percentage of individuals who had degrees, honours and masters compared to men in junior management level. This indicates that there were qualified females at the lower ranks whose skills are not being sufficiently utilized although the numbers of females at middle and senior levels are not adequately represented. There was also a higher percentage (17%) of females at junior management level that did not have post matriculation qualification. These females need to empower themselves and make maximize utilization of the opportunities offered to develop their academic skills.

At the middle management levels females again have a higher percentage of managers who have honours and masters qualification compared to males at this level. The female respondent at senior management level had a higher qualification than both the male senior managers. This indicates that men reach senior management position with minimum qualification, namely a diploma and a degree, whereas women need to prove themselves by obtaining higher qualifications before they are recognized for senior positions.

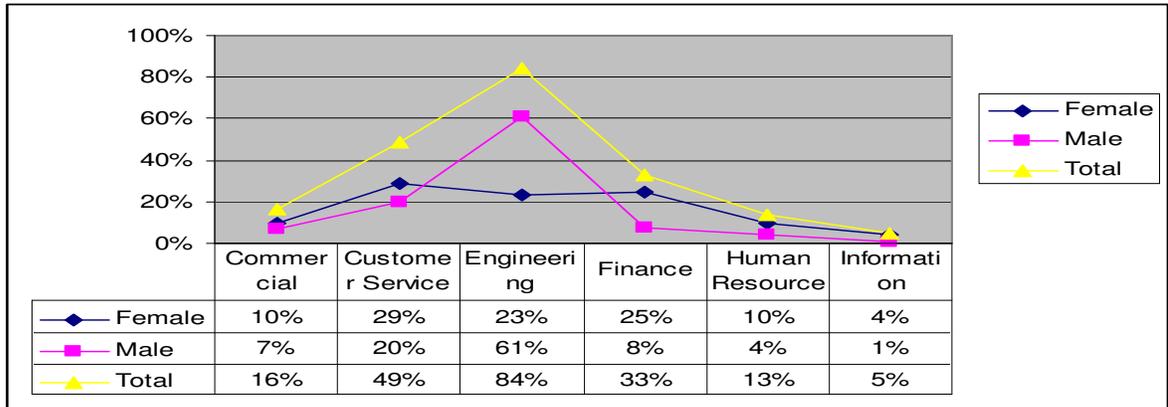
Table 5.6 Analysis of Gender, Qualification and Management level

Gender	Level	Matric	Diploma	Degree	Honours	Masters	Professional	Grand Total
<b>Female</b>	<b>Junior Mgt</b>	17%	31%	25%	8%	2%	0	43
	<b>Middle Mgt</b>	0%	0%	2%	6%	6%	2%	8
	<b>Senior Mgt</b>	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%		1
<b>Female Total</b>		17%	31%	27%	15%	10%	2%	52
<b>Male</b>	<b>Junior Mgt</b>	10%	45%	16%	4%	2%	0	81
	<b>Middle Mgt</b>	0%	4%	9%	4%	2%	3%	22
	<b>Senior Mgt</b>	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	2
<b>Male Total</b>		10%	49%	25%	8%	4%	3%	105

### 5.3.6 ANALYSIS OF GENDER AND DEPARTMENT

The aim of this question was to determine the prevalence of women in the various departments within the Eskom distribution business. Eskom's core departments is Engineering which is clearly depicted in Figure 5.8. It is obvious from the analysis that there is a dominance of males in Engineering (61%). There is an apparent shortage of women in this department and this shortage was complemented by increased number of women managers in the other departments. Women are more prevalent in the so-called "soft jobs" which are Human Resources (10%), Finance (25%), Commercial Service (10%) and Information Management (4%) as compared to their male counterparts. In relation to the sample analysis (Table 3.4) the data is aligned as Engineering is the domineering department in both these analyses. This data indicates that stereotyping is present in this corporate company as women are being restricted or not being encouraged to follow career paths that are gender neutral or male stereotypical.

Figure 5.8 Analysis of males and females per department



## 5.4 ANALYSIS OF ORDINAL DATA

The target questions have been split into 3 dimensions. There are 23 questions that relate to the barriers women encounter in the workplace, 5 questions relating to the impact of gender targets on males managers and the third dimension has 10 questions measuring the various strategies that could assist women in overcoming these barriers. These dimensions overlap with the hypothesis that is being tested and a detailed breakdown is included in Table 3.5.

The reliability testing has been conducted using these dimensions.

### 5.4.1 RELIABILITY TESTING

The Cronbach's coefficient alpha has been used to determine the internal consistency and correlation of the individual target questions within these dimensions. The closer the alpha is to 1 the higher the reliability of the instrument. The alpha per dimension is reflected in Table 5.7.

Table 5.7 Reliability test Results

<b>DIMENSION</b>	<b>ALPHA TESTING</b>
BARRIERS	0.6913
MALE MORALE	0.6622
GENDER STRATEGIES	0.3534

The alpha testing for the barriers dimension and male morale dimension indicates that there are high levels of consistency within these dimensions (Table 5.7). The gender strategies however had an alpha testing of 0.05, which was not acceptable. This low result could be due to questions 27, 45 and 48 not being properly phrased and as a result not being clearly understood by the respondents. If these questions are removed then the reliability for this dimension improves to 0.3534 which is a more acceptable result.

Factor analysis is another tool that is used to ensure reliability.

#### 5.4.2 FACTOR ANALYSIS

A factor analysis has been conducted for the questionnaire and the result is depicted in table 5.8. The factor analysis has grouped similar questions together and has split questions into five groups which were depicted as factor analysis 1,2,3,4 & 5.

Table 5.8 Factor analysis compared to dimensions

<b>QUESTION NO</b>	<b>DETAIL OF QUESTION</b>	<b>DIMENSION</b>	<b>FACTOR ANALYSIS</b>
11	The organization culture is supportive	Barriers	1
12	Gender Stereotyping	Barriers	1
14	Eskom is supportive to women	Barriers	1
16	Women not exposed to challenging assignments	Barriers	1
18	Senior management is not supportive	Barriers	1
19	Men are supportive of women in senior positions	Barriers	1
25	No suitable mentors	Barriers	1
26	Networking amongst women	Barriers	1
35	Men accepting women as their supervisor	Barriers	1
40	Networking amongst men	Barriers	1

42	Promotion opportunities greater for men than women	Barriers	1
43	Leadership skills of women vs. men	Barriers	1
27	Effectiveness of Women Development Forum	GE Strategy	2
31	Flexible work practices effectiveness	GE Strategy	2
36	Gender equity has negatively impacted male morale	Male morale	2
37	Competency of women	Male morale	2
38	Gender Equity appointees are token appointments	Male morale	2
39	Increased tension between men and women	Male morale	2
41	Organization culture supports diversity	Male morale	2
13	After care facility	Barriers	3
15	Linking family commitments to promotions	Barriers	3
17	Skill & experience is a barrier	Barriers	3
29	Women are not willing to take on new opportunities and challenges	Barriers	3
34	Women lack the skill and experience	Barriers	3
44	Women's place is at home	Barriers	3
46	Division of labour	Barriers	3
47	Family inhibits career progression	Barriers	3
24	Mentors	GE Strategy	4
32	Lack of training for women	GE Strategy	4
33	Leadership style of women	GE Strategy	4
45	Women are as successful as men	GE Strategy	4
48	Succession Planning	GE Strategy	4
20	Women not supporting other women	Barriers	5
21	Women support other women in higher bands.	Barriers	5
28	Networking amongst women	Barriers	5

Factor analysis 1, 3 and 5 have been combined to form the barrier dimension, factor analysis 2 is linked to male morale and factor analysis 4 relates to gender strategies. Two questions did not correlate to the factor analysis namely:

a) Question 27- Women development forum

This question was grouped into the second factor. In factor 2 most of the questions relate to the impact of gender targets on men whereas the women development forum was a tool use to increase networking amongst women.

b) Question 31- Flexible work Practices

Here again flexible work practice was linked to factor analysis 2. Flexible work practices are one of the strategies to assist women in balancing their home work life and are not related to impact of gender targets.

The results of the data for gender barriers, impact of gender targets and gender strategies will now be examined in detail.

### 5.4.3 GENDER BARRIERS IN THE WORKPLACE

Frequency tables have been created for all the questions within the barrier dimension and include both male and female responses. An in-depth analysis of each of these questions within the barrier dimension was performed.

#### a) Organizational Culture (Question 11 and 14 )

Table 5.9 Frequency table for Organizational culture (n= 157)

	CHI-SQUARE 2 SIDED			FEMALE	%	MALE	%
Q11	0.489	The organization culture is supportive	Disagree	48	92%	90	88%
			Unsure	2	4%	8	6%
			Agree	2	4%	7	6%
Q14	0.010	Eskom is supportive to women	Disagree	34	65%	94	90%
			Unsure	8	15%	5	5%
			Agree	10	19%	6	5%

Questions 11 and 14 (Table 5.9) are related and inquire whether the organization culture of Eskom is supportive of women in the workplace. The results of the data indicate that the majority of women and men believe that the organization culture is not supportive to the development of women. On the other hand there were a significantly higher number of men than women that disagreed to Eskom being supportive to women in the workplace

(Question 41). The anomaly between men and women indicated that men are not aware of the issues and concerns women encounters in the workplace.

These were some of the comments received regarding the organizational culture of Eskom specifically pertaining to the culture of supporting and developing women in the organization:

*“Sometimes women are promoted to higher positions without any support base; others are quickly promoted and find it difficult on top. Proper and meaningful training and skills development is needed for women to be competent,”* African male.

*“Eskom's policy of setting AA/EE targets at CU greatly disadvantages the applicable candidates because managers feel their job is done once they achieve these targets instead of looking at how much higher such candidates may go in the organization for the benefit of both Eskom and the candidates”* , Black female.

*“There is no official review or follow up on female candidates that have been empowered/appointed through managements Masters (degree) program to assess how well they have been adopted”,* Coloured male.

#### **b) Balancing Family and Work Life (Question 15, 47 and 44)**

The aim of question 15 (Table 5.10) was to determine whether family commitments are hampering women from advancing in the organization. Although both men and women disagreed that family commitments are hampering their advancement, a higher percentage of female managers (36%) as compared to males (17%) agreed that family commitments was a barrier. Since women in most cases shoulders more of the family responsibilities they inevitably are impacted by the demands of work life and family life more than their spouses are. Women therefore need sufficient support and assistance in their work environment so that their dual functions are executed with minimum impact on the workplace

Table 5.10 Frequency of balancing family and work life (n=157)

	CHI-SQUARE 2 SIDED			FEMALE	%	MALE	%
Q15	0.026	Family commitments preventing advancements	Disagree	29	56%	78	74%
			Unsure	4	8%	9	9%
			Agree	19	37%	18	17%
Q44	0.178	Women's place is at home	Disagree	48	92%	86	82%
			Unsure	3	6%	10	9%
			Agree	1	2%	9	9%
Q47	0.853	Family inhibits progression	Disagree	29	56%	54	51%
			Unsure	6	12%	12	11%
			Agree	17	33%	39	37%

Some of the comments received regarding family commitments:

*There is insufficient guidance for women regarding balancing & developing a career & looking after the family, especially where culture affects how the husband supports the wife. Often this means that the high profile women are very independent & do not have too much family responsibilities, or are women whose family is close to being grown-up & has good family support structures, White male.*

*National culture and organizational culture do not support each other in terms of women's empowerment. The dilemmas experienced by women includes to choose between family life and career life i.e. get advanced at work and remain single or get divorced or don't pursue a career for the sake of keeping you family life intact. Husbands being threatened about wife advancement and therefore discourage his wife, African male.*

It is clear that the culture of individual race group can also affect the existence of women in management. Both males and females disagree that starting a family inhibits career progression (question 47). This could be because of flexibility regarding maternity leave and flexible working hours offered to women. There was strong disagreement between men and women that women's place was at home (question 44). The strong sentiment expressed by

men was an indication that male managers have realized that females can contribute equally to the workplace.

**c) Women Lack the Skill and Experience (Question 17 and 34)**

Table 5.11 Frequency of women lacking skill and experience (n=157)

	CHI-SQUARE 2 SIDED			FEMALE	%	MALE	%
Q17	0.124	Skills and Experience as a barrier	Disagree	45	87%	76	72%
			Unsure	1	2%	7	7%
			Agree	6	12%	22	21%
Q34	0.514	Skills and Experience as a barrier	Disagree	42	81%	84	80.0%
			Unsure	1	2%	6	6%
			Agree	9	17%	15	14%

Men and women mutually disagreed that women do not lack the skill and experience to perform their work efficiently. Both question 17 and 34 (Table 5.11) are very similar and as a result the outcome of these questions was similar. It was clear that skill and experience was not a barrier that women encountered in Eskom. A probable contributing factor was the large costs invested in training and development in the organization.

**d) Men Supportive Of Women (Question 19 and 35)**

Table 5.12 Frequency of men supporting women (n= 157)

	CHI-SQUARE 2 SIDED			FEMALE	%	MALE	%
Q19	0.000	Men not supportive of women in senior positions	Disagree	23	44%	76	73%
			Unsure	5	10%	11	10%
			Agree	24	46%	18	17%
Q35	0.001	Men accepting women as supervisors	Disagree	17	33%	68	64%
			Unsure	5	10%	6	6%
			Agree	30	58%	31	30%

Although the majority of men disagreed that they are not supportive to women in the workplace, there was a significant difference in the results for women. For both question 35 and 19 women believed that men did not provide women who held higher positions than them with sufficient support. It was apparent that men and women have differing opinions about whether women in management are given sufficient support from their male employees.

**e) Women Supporting Other Women (Question 20, 21,26 and 28)**

Table 5.13 Frequency of women supporting other women (n=157)

	CHI-SQUARE 2 SIDED			FEMALE	%	MALE	%
Q20	0.133	Women not supporting other women	Disagree	26	50%	61	58%
			Unsure	7	13%	21	20%
			Agree	19	37%	23	22%
Q21	0.171	Women not supporting women in senior positions	Disagree	23	44%	52	50%
			Unsure	14	27%	36	34%
			Agree	15	29%	17	16%
Q26	0.001	Networking amongst women is insufficient	Disagree	37	71%	42	40%
			Unsure	7	14%	29	28%
			Agree	8	15%	34	32%
Q28	0.913	Networking amongst women	Disagree	8	15%	16	15%
			Unsure	8	15%	19	18%
			Agree	36	69%	70	67%

Table 5.13 shows that the majority of men and women disagreed that women support each other in the workplace (Question 20). Question 21 further seeks to understand if women in senior positions are supported by women at the lower levels. Here again both men and women disagreed that senior women are supported by women in the lower ranks of the hierarchy. However, a high percentage of men and women are unsure of how women in lower management relate to women in senior management and this could have skewed the

results. The lack of support amongst women can result in low transfer of skills and knowledge amongst female managers, which is vital for the development of new managers.

Both men and women concur that networking is essential for the development of women (Question 28) and they believed that sufficient networking (Question 26) was prevalent in the organization. There was a significant difference between the results of men and women and 32% of women were unsure regarding networking being sufficient. In summary the results indicated that women did not support each other in the workplace although they believed that networking was important to their development.

The balance of the barriers are depicted in table 5.14 and discussed below individually.

Table 5.14 Frequency of Barriers (n=157)

	CHI-SQUARE 2 SIDED			FEMALE	%	MALE	%
Q13	0.039	After care facility	Disagree	7	13%	29	280%
			Unsure	5	10%	17	16%
			Agree	40	77%	59	56%
Q12	0.091	Gender Stereotyping	Disagree	25	48%	68	65%
			Unsure	4	8%	3	3%
			Agree	23	44%	34	32%
Q16	0.000	Lack of challenging assignments	Disagree	28	54%	93	89%
			Unsure	5	10%	6	6%
			Agree	19	36%	6	5%
Q18	0.000	Senior management is not supportive	Disagree	30	58%	91	87%
			Unsure	9	17%	9	8%
			Agree	13	25%	5	5%
Q25	0.027	No suitable mentors	Disagree	19	36%	62	59%
			Unsure	10	19%	15	14%
			Agree	23	44%	28	27%
Q29	0.096	Women not willing to take on new opportunities and challenges	Disagree	46	89%	87	83%
			Unsure	1	2%	12	11%
			Agree	5	9%	6	6%
Q40	0.002	Networking amongst men	Disagree	23	44%	76	72%

			Unsure	18	35%	15	14%
			Agree	11	21%	14	13%
Q42	0.012	Promotion opportunities greater for men	Disagree	36	69%	92	88%
			Unsure	5	10%	2	2%
			Agree	11	21%	11	10%
Q43	0.008	Leadership skills of women	Disagree	25	48%	76	72%
			Unsure	15	29%	19	18%
			Agree	12	23%	10	9%
Q46	0.002	Division of labour	Disagree	37	71%	47	45%
			Unsure	3	6%	3	3%
			Agree	12	23%	55	52%

**f) After care facility (Question 13)**

From the result of the data (Table 5.14) both men and women strongly affirm that an after-care facility will assist women in balancing home work responsibilities. As expected women were in stronger agreement of such facility, as women usually are responsible for the larger part of the caretaking of children. A lack of such a facility creates added pressures to female managers as they try to balance work deadlines with after-care schedules.

**g) Gender Stereotyping (Question 12)**

A high percentage of males disagreed that gender stereotyping was prevalent in Eskom. For the females there was a relatively equal portion of females who disagreed and agreed that gender stereotyping was a barrier to their advancement.

**h) Lack Of Challenging Assignments (Question 16)**

The majority of men believed that there were sufficient opportunities for women to work on challenging assignments however there is a significant difference in the results for women. This significant difference indicates that challenging assignments are being limited for women although men are of the opinion this was not the case.

**i) Senior Management Support (Question 18)**

Senior management support in the advancement of women is paramount to the success of the organization. Both men and women believe that senior management was involved in women development. However there is a significant difference in opinions between men and women. A lack of senior management is one of the contributing factors linked to an organizational culture that is unsupportive.

**j) Mentors (Question 25)**

The majority of women agreed that it was difficult to find a suitable mentor in the workplace while men disagreed with this statement. The shortfall of women mentors is because of lower number of female managers in the organization. A lack of mentors is an obstacle to the advancement of women.

**k) Women not Empowering themselves (Question 29)**

Women at times can create their own barriers by not taking the initiatives of being involved in new opportunities and challenges. The results of the data have proven that women are actively taking on new challenges as both women and men concur that this was prevalent in the organization.

**l) Networking Amongst Men (Question 40)**

Informal networking amongst men can negatively affect the advancement of women. The results indicate a significantly higher proportion of men disagreed that networking amongst men has negatively affected women. It must be noted however that 35% of women were unsure whether networking amongst men had disadvantaged them.

**m) Promotion Opportunities (Question 42)**

Both men and women disagreed that promotion opportunities were greater for men than women. This was probably due to Eskom's drive to meet gender equity targets in the last few years and therefore all new promotions are being restricted to females only. Although

there are significant differences between men and women this is not considered a barrier to women.

**n) Leadership skills of Women (Question 43)**

Question 43 attempts to determine whether the leadership skills of women better met the needs of the organization than the leadership styles of men. Men strongly believed that leadership skills of a woman did not meet the organizational needs as compared to the leadership skills of men and women shared a similar sentiment.

**o) Division Of Labour (Question 46)**

The majority of women disagreed there were certain jobs that were more suitable to men than women (Table 5.13). Men on the other hand agreed that only men are suitable for some jobs. The above results correlate with the analysis of the sample data where it was obvious that males dominated the Engineering division, being the core department of the organization.

Some of the reasons quoted by men why they believed that women were not suitable to work in the Engineering division were:

*“Shift work is not suitable for women as they have an important role to play at home as well”*  
African male, Engineering.

*“There are certain jobs such as the Technical Officers in the field where they are expected to be on stand by and go out alone at night and climb structures with heavy equipment, women are not suited to this type of work and therefore should not be pushed into these jobs”* White male, Engineering.

*The physical side of work belongs to the men. This has a negative influence on the women as a lot of experiences come from the physical encounters”* White male, Customer Services Department.

*“I personally have nothing against the best person for the job. However in the TSC situation one cannot go and get a temporary worker for a Technical Officer (TO) that has taken maternity leave. Likewise there are constraints when the TO has to feed a young baby, or go out on standby. These are realities, and to think that other staff will fill in for the young mother in these situations is not necessarily going to happen”* White male, Engineering Department.

It is evident that men do not believe that women are suitable to work in Engineering due to the physical demands of the job and the requirements of working on standby. It is also apparent that the managers who manage this department portray gender stereotypical behaviour.

#### **5.4.3.1 MEAN RESULTS FOR GENDER BARRIERS**

The mean and t-tests results of the barrier dimension are represented in Table 5.15. The chi-square test results are also included.

The combined overall average mean for the barrier dimension for both male and female managers was 2.75. In Figure 5.9 all mean results above the average mean line are barriers in the organization, whereas all mean results below the average mean line are not hindering women in the organization. Most of the results also correlate with the frequency results discussed above.

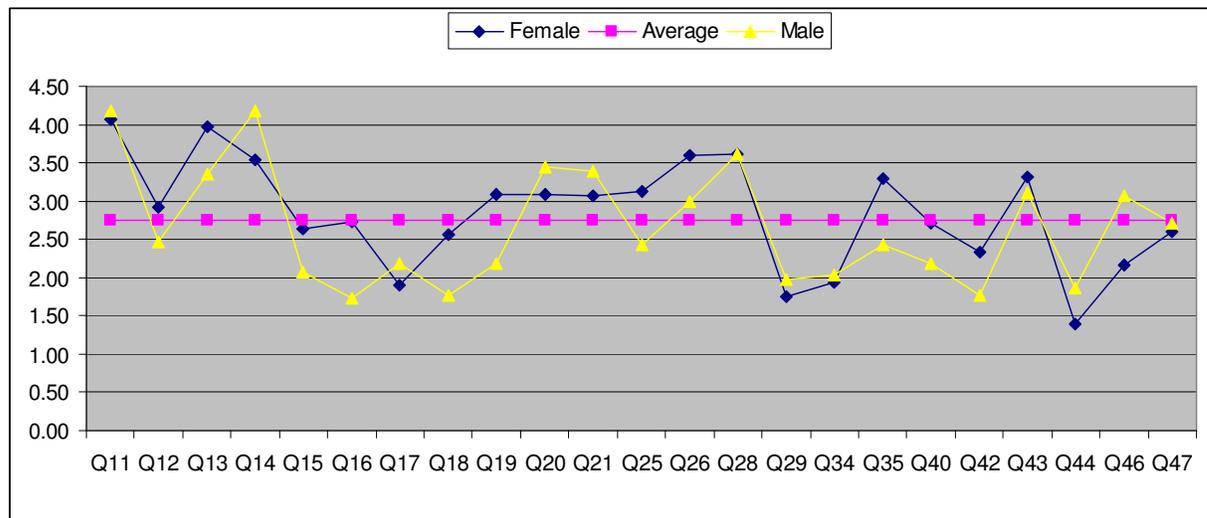
Table 5.15 and Figure 5.9 reflect that both males and females indicated that organizational culture (Q11 & Q14), after care facility (Q13), women not supporting women (Q20 & Q21), leadership skills of women (Q43) and networking amongst women (Q26 & Q28) as barriers in the organization. The means for these questions are above the average mean line.

There were some barriers that men did not perceive as barriers while women considered them as hurdles in the workplace. These barriers included men being supportive of women

in senior positions (Q19 & 35), insufficient mentors (Q25) and gender stereotyping (Q12). The mean results for these questions for females were above the average line while the male results were below. Male managers strongly believed that men were only suitable for certain jobs that are clearly a barrier to women (Q46). As a result the mean result for question 46 for male managers was above the average line.

The results below the average mean indicated that both men and women agreed that family commitments (Q15 & Q47), challenging assignments (Q16), skills and experience (Q17 & Q34), taking on new opportunities (Q29), networking amongst men (Q40), promotion opportunities for females (Q42), senior management support (Q18) and women’s place is in the home (Q44) were not hindering females from progressing in the organization.

Figure 5.9 Barrier means versus average mean (n=157)



Independent t-tests and chi-square tests were used to determine if there were significant differences between the mean scores of the two gender groups. The significant difference was determined at 95% confidence level for both male and female managers. Table 5.15 indicates that significant differences in opinions between males and females were present.

A significant difference is where the t-test and chi-square results are less than 0.05 ( $p < 0.05$ ).

The results that had significant differences are indicated in Table 5.15 and includes organization being supportive to women (Q14), gender stereotyping (Q12), family commitments (Q15), lack of challenging opportunities for females (Q16), senior management support (Q18), men not being supportive to females in senior positions (Q19 & Q35), insufficient suitable mentors (Q25), networking amongst women (Q26), promotional opportunities (Q42), women place at home (Q44), networking amongst men (Q40), leadership skills of women (Q43), after care facility (Q13) and segregation of labour (Q46). The outcome of the significant testing indicates 15 of the 23 questions in the barrier dimension had significant conflicting results amongst male and females.

There were no differences between organizational culture (Q11), women lacking the skills and experience (Q17 & Q34), women supporting other women (Q20 & Q21), networking amongst women (Q28), women willing to take on new challenges and opportunities (Q29) and starting a family preventing career progression (Q47). For these barriers there were no contradictory views between male and female managers.

Table 5.15 Mean, T tests and chi-square results for Barrier dimension (n=157)

Question No	Question Description	Female Mean	Male Mean	T -Test	Chi - square	Barrier
Q11	The organization Culture is supportive	4.06	4.18	0.415	0.364	BB
Q13	After care facility	3.98	3.36	0.003*	0.039*	BB
Q14	Eskom is supportive to women	3.54	4.18	0.000*	0.010*	BB
Q18	Senior management is not supportive	2.56	1.77	0.000*	0.000*	
Q19	Men are supportive of Women in senior positions	3.08	2.19	0.000*	0.000*	BW
Q20	Women not supporting other women	3.08	3.45	0.065	0.133	BB
Q21	Women support other women in higher bands.	3.06	3.38	0.096	0.171	BB
Q25	No suitable mentors	3.13	2.42	0.000*	0.027*	BW
Q35	Men accepting women as their supervisor	3.29	2.42	0.000*	0.001*	BW
Q46	Division of labour	2.17	3.06	0.000*	0.002*	BM
Q12	Gender Stereotyping	2.92	2.47	0.025*	0.091	BW
Q15	Linking family commitments to promotions	2.63	2.07	0.006*	0.026*	
Q16	Women not exposed to challenging assignments	2.73	1.73	0.000*	0.000*	
Q17	Skill & experience is a barrier	1.90	2.19	0.134	0.124	
Q26	Networking amongst women	3.60	2.99	0.001*	0.001*	BB
Q28	Networking amongst women	3.62	3.61	0.973	0.913	BB
Q29	Women are not willing to take on new opportunities and challenges	1.75	1.98	0.098	0.096	
Q34	Women lack the skill and experience	1.94	2.03	0.628	0.514	
Q40	Networking amongst men	2.71	2.19	0.002*	0.002*	
Q42	Promotion opportunities greater for men than women	2.33	1.77	0.001*	0.012*	
Q43	Leadership skills of women vs. men	3.31	3.10	0.001*	0.008*	BB
Q44	Women's place is at home	1.40	1.86	0.006*	0.178	
Q47	Family inhibits career progression	2.60	2.72	0.530	0.853	

\*p<0.05 significant difference

BB=barrier both Men and Women, BW= Barrier women, BM=Barrier Men

It is evident from Table 5.15 that barriers that impact females differ from the barriers that males perceive women encounter in the workplace. This finding is important as it reveals that men are not aware of the hurdles women encounter in the workplace and therefore lack the knowledge and know-how to manage and support women effectively. This correlates to

the findings in Q11, Q14 and Q41 where a high percentage of women indicated that the organization culture does not support them in the workplace.

#### **5.4.3.2 HYPOTHESIS TESTING FOR GENDER BARRIERS**

Main hypothesis: As a consequence of the barriers encountered by women in the workplace there are fewer females than males in senior management positions.

The results of the frequency analysis and mean results indicated that gender barriers do exist in the organization. The organizational culture was ranked as the highest barrier as per the mean results, thereafter followed by after-care facility, women not supporting each other, leadership skills of women, men not supporting women, insufficient mentors, gender stereotyping and division of labour.

Significant differences in opinions between male and female managers regarding their perception of barriers in the workplace were also prominent in this study. Of the 23 barriers, 15 had significance differences between males and females. This indicates that a lack of synergy exists between male and female managers which can create further obstacles towards the attainment of a dynamic workforce.

The results of the survey indicated that gender barriers do exist in the organization. It can therefore be concluded that as a result of the existence of gender barriers in organizations, women are being prohibited from advancing and developing and as a result fewer women prevail in management positions in comparison to the number of male managers.

#### **5.4.4 IMPACT OF GENDER TARGETS ON MALE MORALE**

Gender equity targets have been created to ensure the numbers of women in the business world and more specifically in senior management positions are increased. The consequences setting gender targets (Table 5.16) will now be investigated.

Table 5.16 Assessment of Male morale (n=157)

	QUESTION DESCRIPTION	RESPONSE	FEMALE	%	MALE	%	CHI-SQUARE 2 SIDED
Q36	Male morale	Disagree	10	19%	27	26%	0.583
		Unsure	5	10%	7	7%	
		Agree	37	71%	71	67%	
Q37	GE appointees are competent	Disagree	32	61%	31	30%	0.010
		Unsure	11	21%	36	34%	
		Agree	9	18%	38	36%	
Q38	GE appointees are token appointments	Disagree	32	62%	38	36%	0.080
		Unsure	9	17%	23	22%	
		Agree	11	21%	44	42%	
Q39	Increased tension between men and women	Disagree	14	27%	39	37%	0.415
		Unsure	8	15%	12	11%	
		Agree	30	58%	54	52%	
Q41	Organizational culture supports diversity	Disagree	42	81%	86	82%	0.633
		Unsure	2	4%	7	7%	
		Agree	8	15%	12	11%	

**a) Male morale (Question 36)**

The results of the data (Table 5.16) indicated that both men and women strongly agreed that gender targets have resulted in male morale being negatively impacted.

Following are some are some respondents' comments regarding reasons for male morale decline:

*"Women are being forced into positions where there are many higher qualified men available to do the job. This is leading to many guys being excessively negative and their jobs are suffering and production levels are dropping and dangerous situations are starting to creep into the work place. The fact that I have studied for the past 4 years in my spare*

*time towards my government ticket counts for nothing to the institution as jobs will be given to black females before I am even considered for them” White male.*

*“Currently it seems as if Eskom is promoting people exclusively on race and gender. This violates all professional ethics where the best most experienced person regardless of race or gender gets the job. I work with a number of incredibly skilled young black ladies but also see a large number being promoted because they are black and female” White male.*

*“I strongly believe that woman should be given the same opportunity as men. However when we start to stipulate a preference of gender or setting of targets, this is problematic and leads to Eskom chasing targets at the expense of men” Indian male.*

From the evidence received and the results of the survey it is apparent gender targets have resulted in men being disadvantaged.

**b) Gender equity Appointees are competent (Question 37)**

Organizations are appointing females to meet their gender equity targets. The test is now to determine whether these appointees are competent in their new profiles. Men agreed that women are competent whereas a higher percentage of women disagreed that gender appointees are competent. It is of concern that women believe that new female managers are not competent. Further research needs to be conducted to understand the reasons why women believe gender equity appointee are not competent. It must be noted that 34% of men were unsure whether new female appointees were competent and this possibly could have distorted the results of the survey.

**c) Gender equity appointees are token appointees (Question 38)**

The percentages of men who agreed and disagreed that gender equity appointees are token appointees were on par. However the majority of women did not agree that gender equity appointees are token appointees. The high number of men that were unsure could have also skewed this result.

**d) Increased tension between men and women (Question 39)**

Both men and women agreed that target setting has increased the tension between men and women in the workplace. This is obviously not a healthy situation for an organization to operate in. In a country where the culture of “Ubuntu” needs to be fostered these conflicts between men and women create unnecessary hurdles.

**e) Organizational culture supporting diversity (Question 41)**

If the organizational culture supported diversity then the unnecessary loss of energy invested in conflicts between men and women should be avoided. Question 41 results indicate that the majority of men and women disagreed that the culture of Eskom values diversity in the workplace.

Some of the comments received from respondents further supplement the results, thus indicating that there are major gaps in managing diversity in the organization:

*“I believe that men should take a more active role than women, in ensuring appropriate gender management in the company. I do not believe that men are given adequate forums to address their views. It will work out if there is a balanced interactive approach in addressing this issue through active participation from all parties”, African, male.*

*“Women are in no competition with men in order to take on new opportunities and challenges. Women want opportunities and not hand outs. We need men’s support to work jointly in achieving Eskom's objectives. The bottom line is that there is no competition. If we work as a team there are strengths in men employees and strengths in the women employees which can be combined to achieve all our goals, Indian Female.*

It is therefore clear that men and women need to work together to overcome the conflicts and diversity issues pertaining to gender equity so that gender equity become an asset and a strength instead of a weakness.

#### 5.4.4.1 MEANS, T-TESTS AND CHI-SQUARE TESTS FOR IMPACT OF GENDER TARGET

The mean, t-tests and chi-square results for the impact of gender targets are depicted in Table 5.17.

Table 5.17 Means, t-test and chi-square results for impact of target setting

Question no	Description of Question	Female Mean N=52	Male Mean N=105	T –Test	Chi – square
Q36	Gender equity has negatively impacted male morale	3.58	3.64	0.775	0.583
Q37	Competency of women	3.44	2.88	0.001*	0.010*
Q38	Gender Equity appointees are token appointments	2.40	2.97	0.004*	0.080
Q39	Increased tension between men and women	3.31	3.10	0.297	0.415
Q41	Organization culture supports diversity	3.37	2.88	0.004*	0.633

\* p<0.05 significant difference

The mean results for the questions pertaining to the morale of male employees (Q36) and gender targets increasing tensions between men and women (Q39) are above the average mean result of 3.09 for this dimension. The mean result for organizations supporting a diverse culture was also above the average mean for females, while only female employees considered gender equity appointees as incompetent.

The chi-square and t-test results indicate that significant differences exists between male and female managers with respect to whether gender equity appointees are competent or mere token appointees and organization promoting a diverse culture.

#### 5.4.4.2 HYPOTHESIS TESTING FOR IMPACT OF GENDER TARGET

The sub-hypothesis relating to this dimension is whether gender equity target setting has negatively impacted men in the workplace.

The results of the study (frequency and mean results) indicate that both men and women agree that gender targets have resulted in reduction of male self-esteem. As a consequences of gender target setting tension between male and female managers has increased. As a result of the decrease in male morale women in senior positions are not being supported. The result of the data thus confirms that setting targets for gender recruitments was having a negative impact on male employees and is also not promoting a culture of unity. Thus gender target has negatively disadvantaged men in the workplace.

#### 5.4.5 EFFECTIVENESS OF GENDER STRATEGIES

Organizations have embarked on many strategies to assist women in the workplace. Table 5.18 is a summary of the results of the survey assessing the effectiveness of gender strategies. The results will be discussed per strategy and linked to Table 5.18.

Table 5.18 Effectiveness of Gender Strategies (n=157)

Question no	Question Summary		Female	%	Male	%	Chi-squared
Q24	Mentorship	Disagree	4	8%	6	6%	0.011
		Unsure	7	13%	2	2%	
		Agree	41	79%	97	92%	
Q27	Women Development Forum	Disagree	7	14%	13	13%	0.382
		Unsure	10	19%	31	29%	
		Agree	35	67%	61	58%	
Q31	Flexible working practices	Disagree	14	27%	26	25%	0.449
		Unsure	18	35%	28	27%	
		Agree	20	38%	51	48%	
Q33	Leadership style of women	Disagree	23	44%	60	57%	0.299
		Unsure	10	19%	17	16%	
		Agree	19	37%	28	27%	

Q32	Training and Development	Disagree	18	35%	20	19%	0.091
		Unsure	3	6%	10	10%	
		Agree	31	60%	75	71%	
Q45	Women are as successful as men	Disagree	10	19%	20	19%	0.966
		Unsure	2	4%	5	5%	
		Agree	40	77%	80	76%	
Q48	Succession Planning	Disagree	29	56%	62	59%	0.865
		Unsure	16	31%	28	27%	
		Agree	7	13%	15	14%	

**a) Mentoring (Question 24)**

There was mutual agreement between men and women that mentorship was vital for the development of women in the organization. Of the 52 women, 15 managers had mentors (Table 5.19) and 30 of the 105 men had mentors. These low numbers are a cause of concern. Although the majority of men and women believed strongly that mentorship was beneficial it was apparent that there were bottlenecks in the current mentorship programme.

Table 5.19 Mentorship programme (n=157)

Gender	Female		Female Total	Male		Male Total
	No	Yes		No	Yes	
Mentorship program	No	Yes		No	Yes	
Strongly disagree	1		1	3	2	5
Disagree	3		3	1		1
Unsure	5	2	7	1	1	2
Agree	21	8	29	38	18	56
Strongly agree	7	5	12	32	9	41
Grand Total	37	15	52	75	30	105

Comments received regarding the effectiveness of the mentorship programme:

*“The current mentorship programme is not effective because only a few managers are willing to commit. I believe that Eskom is losing many women who could add value to the business to other companies unnecessarily because Eskom has no proper development programme for them in place”* , African female.

*“I believe that in the case of mentors, too often only Senior personnel are selected, where staff with long service would be better qualified to assist in grooming women. This is a definite barrier, as senior staff is normally “Too busy” ”* , white male with 30 years of service.

It is evident that the current mentorship programme is ineffective in the development and moulding of female managers.

**b) Networking amongst Women ( Question 27)**

The Women Development Forum is a vehicle that could assist in encouraging women to network and share ideas and also to provide support to each other. Men and women agreed that this forum could be beneficial for networking. However of the 52 women only 29% belong to the Women Development Forum (Table 5.20).

Table 5.20 Women Development Forum Membership (Female managers n=52)

<b>Women Development Forum (Question 7)</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Total</b>
Strongly disagree	2		2
Disagree	5		5
Unsure	9	1	10
Agree	20	11	31
Strongly agree	2	2	4
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>52</b>

Networking can provide future leaders with valuable learning and increases collaboration amongst women. The low percentage of women who are members of the forum indicates that this forum is not successful in achieving these goals.

**c) Flexible Working Policy (Question 31)**

This policy has been discussed in detail in Chapter 4. Both male managers and female managers agreed that this policy was effective in the workplace. However 26% of male and 34% of female managers indicated that they were unsure. Table 5.21 summarizes the number of male and female managers (Question 30) who were aware of the flexible work practice policy. A high percentage of male and females were unaware of Eskom flexible working practices and this could have resulted in the high number of “unsure” for question 31.

Table 5.21 Awareness of Flexible work Practices (n=157)

<b>Aware of Flexible work practices (Question 30)</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Grand Total</b>
Female	23	40%	29	60%	52
Male	45	40%	60	60%	105
Grand Total	68		89		157

**d) Training (Question 32)**

The majority of male and female managers agreed there was a lack of sufficient training available to assist the development of women. This correlates to the finding that the organizational culture was not supportive to women in the workplace.

**e) Succession Planning (Question 48)**

The data provided evidence that both female and male managers disagreed that succession planning was successful in the organization. A high percentage of male (26%) and females (31%) respondents were unsure whether succession planning was well planned and organized. Succession planning can assist women in being properly groomed for prospective promotions; however it is evident that employees are recruited into new positions with minimum exposure and guidance.

**f) Leadership style of Women (Question 33 and 45)**

Both men and women disagreed that the leadership style of women were different from the organization norm (Question 33). However men and women agreed that women are as successful as men in the organization (Question 45). It is thus evident that the leadership style of women is not unique and has adopted the dominant male stereotypical approach.

**5.4.5.1 MEANS, T TESTS AND CHI-SQUARE TESTS FOR EFFECTIVENESS OF GENDER STRATEGIES**

The average overall mean for gender strategies was 3.16 and a standard deviation of 0.474. The means and t-tests are depicted in Table 5.22.

Table 5.22 Mean, t-test and chi-square for gender strategies

Question no	Description of Question	Female Mean n=52	Male Mean n=105	T –Test	Chi - square
Q24	Mentors role in development	3.92	4.21	0.064	0.011*
Q27	Effectiveness of Women Development Forum	3.58	3.50	0.619	0.382
Q31	Flexible work practices effectiveness	3.00	3.14	0.500	0.449
Q32	Lack of training for women	3.31	3.72	0.045	0.091
Q33	Leadership style of women	2.85	2.62	0.237	0.299
Q45	Women are as successful as men	3.87	3.74	0.519	0.966
Q48	Succession Planning	2.37	2.25	0.533	0.865

\* p<0.05 significant difference

Although the mean results are high for the role of mentorship, Women Development Forum and flexible work practices it is evident from the results of the study that these strategies are not effective in the workplace. The chi-square result indicated that there were significant differences between male and female opinions regarding the importance of mentorship in the development of women.

**5.4.5.2 HYPOTHESIS TESTING FOR EFFECTIVENESS OF GENDER STRATEGIES**

The hypothesis relating to this dimension is to determine if the gender strategies organizations currently engaged in are effective.

Male and female managers agreed that mentorship, networking and flexible work policies were important; however inconsistencies have been found in the actual implementation of these policies. It is apparent that these strategies are not being utilized to their maximum and as a result the full benefits are not being realized.

The training offered for the development of women is perceived to be ineffective by both males and females. Furthermore insufficient succession planning was carried out in the organization. Female leadership styles were not considered different from the organizational norm and indicated that women were not utilizing their unique traits in their management roles. It can therefore be concluded that the strategies currently in place are not achieving the desired outcome and are thus ineffective.

## 5.5 CONCLUSION

The results of the survey produced both interesting and contradictory results. The response rate was 29% which was relatively satisfactory and comprised 33% female.

The research analysis began with an examination of the demographic data. This analysis indicated that there was a higher prevalence of females in junior management than in middle and senior management. It also indicated a higher representation of men in the engineering department which was the core department of the organization and women had a higher representation in finance, human resources and customer services departments. The outcome of the survey reflected women had higher post matriculation qualifications in junior, middle and senior management positions.

The target questions were split into three dimensions, namely barriers, strategies and impact of gender targets. The barrier dimension indicated that both men and women agreed that the organizational culture, women not being supported by other women, lack of after-care facilities and the leadership skills of women are barriers in the workplace. On the other

hand men pretended to be ignorant of the existence of some barriers, these included, insufficient mentors, men not supporting women in senior positions and gender stereotyping. Men strongly believed that there were certain jobs that were not suitable for a woman which has resulted in their dominance in the Engineering department. Both men and women agreed the women had the skills and experience to perform the job. Promotion opportunities were greater for females; senior management support, women exposed to challenging assignments and networking amongst men were not barriers that women encountered in the workplace.

The second hypothesis indicated that gender targeting has negatively impacted the morale of men and the organization holistically. The targets have resulted in diversity in the workplace not being optimally managed as men have the perception that gender appointees are token appointments.

The testing of the effectiveness of gender strategies indicated that mentoring, networking and flexible work policies were ranked as highly effective strategies. However the actual implementation of these strategies indicated that these policies are not being utilized optimally. Some of the other strategies that were not being managed include lack of training programmes for female managers; succession planning and females adopting the dominant male leadership styles.

The results of the research findings will be correlated to the literature study in chapter 6 to determine if there are similarities or differences in the results.

## **6 CHAPTER**

### **DISCUSSION OF RESULTS AND FINDINGS**

Promoting a diverse and multicultural environment results in better decision making, enhances creativity and innovation. Organizations need to realize that diverse human resources can be utilized to sustain its competitive advantage. Women can make their own contribution to the sustainability of South Africa provided they are given the opportunity. However as already identified women have to overcome many hurdles before they are able to climb the corporate ladder.

The findings of the survey were compared to the literature study to determine if there were any variances or correlations between the results and the literature study. The discussions initially looked at the demographic data and thereafter the three dimensions identified, namely barriers, impact of gender targets and gender strategies

#### **6.1 DEMOGRAPHICAL DATA**

The demographical analysis indicated that inequality in gender was more apparent at upper levels of management than at junior management levels. Cotter et al (2001) agrees with this finding as he stated that the gender gap accelerates as one moves up the organizational hierarchy.

The data also revealed a higher percentage of females that were not married compared to men. This concurs with Veale & Gold (1998) and Omar & Davidson (2001) findings that women managers choose to remain single due their demanding role as managers.

## 6.2 BARRIERS IN THE WORKPLACE

The statistical testing confirms that barriers do exist in the workplace. Conclusion can then be drawn that barriers have resulted in fewer women in senior management positions which was visible in the sample that was tested. Gender barriers have prevented women from advancing and progressing in the corporate world.

### **a) Organizational Culture**

The results have confirmed that organizational culture is ranked as the barrier having the most impact of women in organizations. Conclusion can then be drawn that the culture which is being fostered is not favourable to the growth and progress of female managers. It is apparent that females are appointed to management positions to meet gender targets and are thereafter not given the proper assistance and guidance. There is no ongoing assessment being conducted to determine if females appointed are coping in their new profile as managers. The sustainability of gender equity will be determined on whether the organization is continuously adapting and are aware of the environment within which female managers operate within the workplace. The environment needs to be supportive and encouraging so that maximum benefit can be attained from a diverse workforce.

Mills (2002) states that by studying the organizational culture conclusions can be made whether gender discrimination is prevalent. It can thus be concluded that gender inequities are present in this organization and is one of the key reasons for the under representation of females in management positions. This barrier can pose a serious threat to the retention of female managers and as a result the organization will not be able to retain successful women in management for a sustainable period. Booysen (2005) concurs an unsupportive organizational culture is also one of the reasons women are moving between jobs thus resulting in low retention levels of female managers. Van der Colff & Van Scheers (2004) states that organizational culture can restrict or stifle an individual and this corresponds to the present sentiments of female managers in the organization. An organizational culture is

a key determinant of the success of the organization and if this culture is unsupportive and repressive then this is a sure recipe for failure.

**b) Male managers supporting females in the workplace**

Bird (2003), states that socialization and gender stereotyping has resulted in men not being comfortable with working with women that are at a higher hierarchical level than them. In correlation, the results of the research indicate that male managers are not supportive of female managers although they prefer to be perceived as supportive. This anomaly can hinder female managers from progressing. It is apparent that male manager's lack of support can create a negative and unproductive workforce. It can also create problems with respect to team work and the achievement of team goals. This barrier is one of the contributing factors to the unsupportive organizational culture experienced by both male and female managers.

**c) Division of labour**

Flood et al (1997) states that women are traditionally found in 'soft jobs' and are under-represented in various economic sectors. Engineering is an area where there is a drastic shortage of female employees. The study confirms that this observable fact is present as women have the least representation within the Engineering department. One of the reasons for this state is the prevalence of gender stereotyping in the workplace. Women are not given the opportunities but are judged as not being equipped to operate in the Engineering environment. Women are found in the most marginalized structures while men hold the majority of the power and opportunities thus preventing women from progressing (Smith, 2002).

**d) Women not supporting other women**

The results indicate that female managers do not support each other although they understand the importance of networking. Wrigley (2002) states as women move up the hierarchy they do not support each other. This can result in a culture where women feel they are isolated. A lack of support can also hinder aspiring females from entering the

management arena. There is a lack of research exploring reasons why women do not support each other as they move up the hierarchy.

**e) Mentors**

Nicholson (1996) and Ragins et al (1998) states that there is a shortage of female mentors and same sex mentors is beneficial for the individual. The results concur that there are insufficient females that are mentors. As a result of a shortage of female mentors females are accepting males as mentors and as a consequence they adopt male leadership styles instead of practising their androgynous leadership styles. Vinnicombe & Singh (2002) confirms that the presence of more female role models in the future will make feminine management styles more acceptable.

**f) Balancing home and work responsibilities**

The result of the research confirms that balancing home and work responsibilities is not one of the barriers female managers encounter in the workplace. This result concurs to Heilman (1997) findings that having a family does not make female managers less committed to their work responsibilities.

**g) Gender Stereotyping**

Although gender stereotyping was not considered a barrier by men, it is apparent from the results of gender division of labour, leadership styles of women and men not supporting women in senior positions that gender stereotypical behaviour is practiced in the organization. The conflicting results confirm that males would like to be perceived as not being prejudice towards women in the workplace; however the results prove otherwise.

**h) Promotion opportunities**

Promotional opportunities are not being limited to males only. For the past 5 years Eskom's gender targets have been increasing progressively. As a result of this all new promotions are set aside for females. Women have benefited from gender equity target setting however

these targets have had negative consequences to male employees and to organizations as a whole.

### 6.3 IMPACT OF GENDER TARGETS

In order to overcome inequities in the workplace organizations have set targets to increase the number of women in the organization. The consequence of target setting has been investigated.

#### **a) Male morale and conflict between male and female employees**

The results of the survey indicate gender equity target setting has resulted in male morale being low and as a consequence tension between male and female managers in the workplace being increased. Burke & Black (1997) confirms that this is one of the outcomes of gender equity initiatives and refers to it as male backlash. If this situation is not managed properly it could lead to lower job satisfaction, increased turnover, and reluctance to share knowledge with female protégés and a lack of support for affirmative action (Rosen & Jerdee, 1979).

It is evident from the survey that male managers are not motivated and resulting in increased tensions between men and women. Men are also not supportive to women in senior management. In this study it is also evident that there are more promotional opportunities for females as a consequence of managers wanting to meet targets. Rosen & Jerdee (1979) claims that backlash is more prominent when women are given preferential treatment. All the symptoms of male backlash are apparent and it needs to be managed.

#### **b) Competency of Gender Equity Appointees**

Men believed that gender appointees were competent in their jobs; however women believed that they lack the competence. Reasons for this anomaly need to be further investigated.

### **c) Gender Diversity**

Both men and women have agreed that the organization does not support diversity in the workplace. Much has been achieved in the last 10 years of South Africa's democracy. However in order to be sustainable into the future, target setting will not be the solution. Direct and open communication could resolve many of the hostilities between both the genders.

## **6.4 EFFECTIVENESS OF GENDER STRATEGIES**

As gender targets are being pursued and the number of female managers is gradually increasing, organizations need to assist them in balancing their dual roles by implementing effective gender strategies.

### **a) Implementation of Policies**

There is insufficient alignment between formal policies and actual implementation of the policies in the organization. Although most Eskom policies have good intent, the organization falls short in the actual execution and management of these policies. As a result many women believe that the organization is not supportive of them.

### **b) Leadership Style of Women**

The caring, participative, people-orientated and transformational leadership style of women managers provides them with a competitive edge over their male colleagues (Appelbaum, 2002). However the research result indicates that both men and women agree that the leadership styles of women are not different from organizational norm. This behaviour correlates to Gazso (2004) findings which states that in order for women to be able to work in a "gendered work culture" women are functioning and acting similar to men. As women move higher in the hierarchy they are losing their femininity. The inhibiting culture of the organization is also preventing women from utilizing their unique management skills. Further Booysen (1999b) says as a result of a lack of female role models female managers model their behaviour more on stereotypical "masculine" culture than on a "feminine" culture. As a

result of this female managers adopt the mindset of “think manager, think male”. The study also confirms that there is a lack of female mentors this could also be a contributing factor to women adopting the dominating male attributes.

### **c) Mentoring**

Males and females both agreed that mentoring is a key strategy that can be utilized to overcome barriers. Ragins et al (1998) concurs that mentoring is important in career advancement of female managers. However it apparent from the sample that only 30% of managers have mentors. One of the contributing factors to these low results is a lack of sufficient female mentors.

### **d) Succession Planning**

Succession planning is poorly organized in the organization and as result women are placed in management positions with poor guidance and knowledge. Van der Colff and Van Scheers (2004) agreed that succession planning is important for career planning and in increasing the number of women in different categories.

### **e) Training and Development**

Currently there is insufficient training being conducted to assist women in their workplace. Smith (2002) stated if women are required to progress in the organization then training is pivotal to their development prior to them progressing.

### **f) Flexible work practices**

The results indicate that flexible work practices are currently not very effective in the workplace only 40% of managers are aware of this policy. Veal & Gold (1998) confirms that these practices assist women in overcoming their obstacles. Much effort has to be invested to ensure that this policy is being successfully implemented.

## 6.5 CONCLUSION

As organizations increase the number of females in management positions the challenge they are faced with is the sustainability and management of diversity. The organizational culture is perceived to be unsupportive when women and men are not working collectively towards common goals. Organizations need to realize that women are capable of being exceptional managers and can also make meaningful contributions to the business and the community. Women need to be given the opportunity to prove themselves and men need to start accepting the status quo or else the benefits of this dynamic workforce will never be realized.

The recommendations and future research suggestions will now be investigated in chapter 7.

## **7 CHAPTER**

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Companies have to make an effort to understand the obstacles women encounter in the workplace and take the necessary steps to address the different barriers and reduce stereotypical thinking, prejudice and bias which becomes vehicles for discrimination in the workplace.

#### **7.1 RECOMMENDATIONS**

One of the useful strategies organizations can utilize to determine if their gender strategies are on par with other organizations is benchmarking. Benchmarking can be done both internationally and locally to determine best practices. This is a constructive technique in providing suggestions and recommendations on what additional can be done to assist women in the workplace.

##### **7.1.1 BARRIERS IN THE WORKPLACE**

###### **a) Organizational culture and men supporting women**

The organizational culture is viewed as the soul of an organization. If the organizational culture is not aligned to the strategic goals of the company then the organization will struggle in achieving its overall objectives and direction. Diversity should be encouraged and nurtured as a diverse culture can increase the organizations problem solving and decision making abilities. To have a culture that is free of any discrimination, companies must undergo a paradigm shift with regard to how its employees relate to each other. A workforce that is diverse and different needs to be viewed as a competitive advantage rather than a stumbling block. Leaders of the organization should therefore play a key role in shaping and moulding the culture of the organization.

#### **b) Women supporting other women**

It is vital that women support each other in the workplace or else women will feel isolated. Initiatives must be taken to utilize every opportunity to encourage women to network and gain the benefits of this crucial strategy. Women Development Forums should be encouraged and should be supported by senior management. This forum can be instrumental in increasing unity and understanding the issues affecting women. Hence this forum can empower women provided it is operated and managed effectively.

#### **c) Leadership styles of women**

The study confirms that women are not utilizing their unique management styles to their advantage. In order for an organization to maintain its competitive advantage and be a global contender they need to unravel the full potential of their human capital.

#### **d) After-care facility**

As more women are introduced into the workplace, businesses need to facilitate their needs. This includes providing day care centres near their workplace. A business case needs to be prepared, looking at costs, risks and benefits of such a facility. After care facilities will alleviate some of the stresses females and males have to endure due to demands of managing their families.

### **7.1.2 IMPACT OF GENDER TARGETS**

#### **a) Diversity Management**

Burke & Black (1997) states that backlash needs to be dealt with and not ignored. The most effective strategy that could be utilized to harness the benefits of a diverse workforce is robust diversity management programme. This programme can serve as an important ingredient to business performance. Diversity management training needs to be conducted for both male and female managers so that both men and women are equipped to manage the intricacies of diversity management. Diversity training has the impact of improving

productivity, creativity, employee morale, corporate culture and reducing inter-personal conflict.

Human Resources should not be solely responsible for diversity management but this training should be the accountability of all managers within the organization. Although the review of Eskom in chapter 4 indicate that the organization is conducting diversity management training, it is clear from the research results that the current training is not effective.

A group that consists of different people increases creativity and is an asset to an organization. Organizations need to harness this strength and ensure that diversity becomes and remains a way of life. Employees should be able to openly communicate to each other regarding issues pertaining to gender prejudices and discriminatory practices. Open communications can also improve trust in relationships between male and female managers.

#### **b) Men and women working together**

The negative feelings men engage in can be converted to positive energies if they increase their involvement in the struggle for gender equality. However male involvement should not overpower women as the locus of leadership in this struggle. If men are involved in the contribution towards gender equality this will then mobilize them in changing their behaviour and increase the trust level between these two groups. A male forum should be created to address all gender issues. Men should be part of the solution rather than treated as the problem.

#### **c) Gender equity appointees are incompetent**

A higher percentage of females agreed that gender equity appointees were not competent to perform their job. However the results of the survey also indicated that women and men did have the necessary skills to perform their jobs. An investigation needs to be conducted

to determine reasons why women strongly believed this was prevalent although men were not aware of its prominence.

### **7.1.3 GENDER STRATEGIES**

#### **a) Retention Strategy**

A retention strategy can be utilized to assist in retaining key competent staff, in particular females, in management positions. This strategy should encompass a job that motivates individual, well planned and supported career paths and a strategy to meet the personal needs of employees by balancing work and home demands. On-going feedback regarding employees' performance and financial rewards are other elements that should also be included in the strategy.

#### **b) Succession Planning**

It is apparent from the results of the research that insufficient succession planning is conducted. A long term strategic plan identifying future skills requirements needs to be performed. The plan should include taking into account critical skills needs and equity requirements. Thereafter potential successors need to be identified and groomed via development programmes. The individual needs to be monitored and a clear track record maintained of his or her performance. Continuous feedback regarding the individual's performance is also imperative.

#### **c) Flexible work Practice Policy**

Only 40% of managers were aware of the flexible work policy practice in the organization. If male and female managers are required to manage female managers effectively in the workplace then they should be aware of all the gender policies that are available. This policy should be made more accessible to all managers so that they are made aware of the various flexible work options available. A workshop should be conducted regarding this policy. This tool is effective only if its users know how to use it or else it becomes another futile policy.

#### **d) Lack of training**

Training offered to assist female managers in their growth needs to be reassessed as both male and female managers concur that current training is insufficient. Training needs to be tailored to meet the development needs of females which could include leadership training, diversity management and stress management.

#### **e) Women Development Forum**

The current Women Development Forum in the Region is not fully functional. From the survey it is clear that networking can play a major role in the development and advancement of women. It is recommended that a concerted effort be invested in this forum due to its many benefits.

#### **f) Mentorship Programmes**

There are huge benefits to be gained from mentoring for both the protégé and the organization. It is therefore imperative that a concerted effort be made to determine the reasons for the failure of this programme. Specific attention should be made to increase the pool of female mentors.

## **7.2 FUTURE RESEARCH**

This study has indicates that there are many gaps in this study that need to be further explored. Below are some of the recommendations and suggestions for future research.

#### **a) Impact of gender equity targets**

The researcher has only concentrated on the impact that gender equity target setting has on men. However from the feedback received it was evident that gender equity target setting has also impacted Indian and White women in the business. Future research needs to look at the issues that White and Indian woman have to encounter and provide suggestion on how they can overcome these dilemmas.

### **b) Mentoring**

It is agreed that mentoring is beneficial to the individual and the organization but judging by the number of managers that have mentors it was clear that there are bottlenecks in the current mentorship programmes. Future research can determine reasons for mentorship programmes not succeeding in organizations.

### **c) Culture**

Societal culture can also create demands on female managers and also prevent them from advancing. A study could be conducted to analyze various racial cultures and determine if they are in conflict with corporate cultures. The study could look at the culture of Africans, Whites, Indians and Coloureds.

### **d) Leadership style of women**

As both men and women agree that the leadership style of women was not different from men and that the stereotypical leadership style of men was the preferred norm, further studies need to be conducted to determine the current leadership attributes of female managers in the organization. This study could look at factors that are preventing women from adopting their own unique management styles in the workplace.

### **e) Retention levels of females**

A study needs to be conducted correlating the retentions levels of females in senior positions in corporate organizations to the barriers women encounter in the workplace. The ability of an organization to retain its females will be dependent on the gender strategies an organization engages in.

### **f) Women not supporting other women**

The results indicated that although female managers believed that networking was important for their development, they did not support each other in the workplace. Further research needs to be done to understand the reasons for this anomaly. This behaviour is known as “stiletto ceiling” and a lack of research in this behaviour is apparent.

Further, this study has only been limited to one region within the Distribution business of Eskom. In order to assert if the findings are conclusive the study should be expanded to other regions and correlations and differences should be drawn between the different regions.

### 7.3 CONCLUSION

In order to overcome the barriers senior management must firstly identify the barriers. It is clear from the results of the research that organizations still have a long journey to go to create an equitable workplace in which a diverse and multi-cultural society is fostered. However small steps in the right direction can have a major impact.

Gender equity if nurtured, can bring strength to the organization. Therefore a culture that promotes tolerance and respect for each other should be the norm. This will then create an organizational climate that is conducive for individuals to reach organizational goals more easily.

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## **APPENDIX A - QUESTIONNAIRE**