EXPLORING EXPERIENCES OF FEMALE ACADEMICS AT A HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION LIMPOPO PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA

BY

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DECLARATION

I, Muleya Abgirl, declare that this research entitled '***Exploring experiences of female academics at a higher education institution, in the Limpopo Province, in South Africa'*** is my original work and has not been submitted for any degree at any other university or institution. The thesis does not contain other persons' writing unless specifically acknowledged and referenced accordingly.

Signature………………………………… Date…………………………………………

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my family, best friends who have been there for me through out. I love you all for being there for me always, you are the best there ever will be!

A special dedication to my father, Pastor N.J. Sinyosi, who guided and instilled faith in me throughout this project your quote "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" have come to pass in my life. When it seemed impossible along the way your prayers kept me going, Thank you for your love and dedication, Dad.

ABSTRACT

Institutions of higher learning are still masculine-orientated; this creates a barrier for women in terms of career advancement. To this effect women are under-represented in top academic positions. The study employed qualitative research methods to explore factors that contribute to the under-representation of women in senior positions at the University of Venda. A combination of purposive and convenience sampling was used to select twenty five female academics (25). Data was collected through primary and secondary data, semi-structured interviews were used to elicit and illuminate women's voices on issues that affect them and a thematic analysis was used to analyse the collected data. The research findings demonstrate that the University's environment continues to be masculine-oriented within most of employment categories as well as in academia where women struggle to thrive. Women face multiple challenges in ascending the academic ladder which results in the under-representation of women in management and academic levels. These challenges included: the stringent criteria for promotion which do not seem to accommodate women, especially mothers, lack of female role-models, mentors and networks. The second major barrier is the teaching work-load which poses difficulties for women, preparations for teaching took long hours leaving them with no time for family, research, publication, as well as to further their studies, which are necessary requirements for promotion. The third major barrier women are faced with is the challenge of balancing multiple roles - as students, workers and mothers. Balancing these multiple roles makes it difficult for women to meet the highly stringent promotion criteria in the University

Key words: Gender, Gender Stereotypes, Gender equality, Gender mainstreaming and Glass Ceiling.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AA- Affirmative Action

CEDAW - Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

CHE - Council of Higher Education

EEA - Employment Equity Act

Ed - Education

EU- European Union

HEIs - Higher Educational Institutions

HE- Higher Education

HESA - Higher Education South Africa

HOD- Head of Department

IHL- Institutions of Higher Learning

UN - United Nations

UNIVEN- University of Venda

FWCW- Fourth World Conference for Women

PHD- Doctor of Philosophy

SADC - Southern African Development Community

SA- South Africa

SAHE - South Africa Higher Education

UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUD

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This study explores experiences of female academics at higher education institution in a University in Limpopo. Women continue to enter the workforce and pursue managerial and professional careers in almost all countries regardless of their marital or parental status and at the same time, they continue to balance work with their expected gender roles. Women are taking the path of professional careers; they are breaking out from their primarily traditional female-oriented jobs to more non-traditional and previously male-oriented careers (Martin, 2013). Research shows that women are ascending professional ladders/positions in large numbers and tend to outnumber men, especially in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). However in universities in several countries, women tend to be concentrated in administration and lower academic positions, (Davidson and Burke, 2011). Women continue to be discriminated against as the structures of the HEIs remain 'masculine-oriented'. This leads to the under-representation of women in higher positions in areas such as academia, research and leadership. South Africa uses affirmative action to fight against unfair discrimination of individuals at the work place and most of South African organizations are expected to follow affirmative action and the Employment Equity Act in order to redress unfair discrimination at the work place. The context of my research will be international, regional and local.

This chapter comprises of the introduction, background of the study, problem statement, and significance of the study, aims and objectives, research questions and definition of terms

1.2. Background of the study

Historically, society believed a woman's place was in her home, caring for her husband and children, as opposed to being in the workplace. In European countries the role of women in productive work was assisting their husbands in maintaining the family or acting as business partners, often without payment and if they were paid for their work, women earned far less than their male counterparts (Jalilvand, 2000). Women's participation in the labour force has expanded significantly since the end of World War II as Egunjobi (2009) asserts that the war opened the gateway to women's emancipation in Europe and the USA before any University was introduced to Africa. Eventually, women began extending their work outside the home in the form of domestic to other jobs such as clerical work. As Booysen (2000) rightly says, since World War II, women have played an increasingly important role in the economies of both developing and developed countries, South Africa included. The integration of women into the

workforce was a slow process   often viewed unfavorable by society (Watson *et al.,* 2002). After the war, less than one-third of women had infiltrated the labour force. However, women's participation has continued to rise rapidly from the 1960s through the 1980s (BLS Reports May, 2014). At various times throughout history, working women were viewed as immoral and unfeminine objects of pity. It was also feared that valued feminine traits such as a meek nature and submissiveness would be lost if women entered the workforce (Watson *et al.,* 2002). In the light of the above women faced and continue to face multifaceted challenges in the workplace. Working women were accused of being negligent mothers who did not have time for their children and family, as they were expected to perform duties as wives and mothers in addition to fulfilling their professional responsibilities. Frequently women employees were not taken seriously either by their bosses, male colleagues, and/or society (Tinklin *et al.,* 2005). This caused some women to experience feelings of guilt or selfishness if they put their career interests first (Tinklin *et al.,* 2005). These are the reasons women have lagged behind in their careers but currently, the view of a woman's role in the workforce has gradually but significantly changed.

The rise of feminism in the late 1970s has led to positive changes in many women's lives, for since then; women have been gaining access to the labour market in increasing numbers with the expectation of balancing traditional mothers' and wives' roles with career aspirations. Combining motherhood and career, however,   continues to be a dilemma for most women in the 20th century (Gillespie, 2003). The postcolonial feminist theory asserts that women were doubly colonialized by imperial and patriarchal ideologies and it offers a reasonable way to understand the experiences of woman in their career advancement (Adusah-Karikari, 2008)**.**

Globally, women continue to be disadvantaged as regards public participation in decision-making positions in the public and private sectors of society as they still face gender-based discrimination in hiring and promotions (Hesse-Biber, 2014). It is also the case in institutions of higher education even though over the years, progress has been made globally in improving the status of women in administrative and academic positions (Group, World Bank, 2012). The United Nations and its specialized agencies have been giving women preferences, although gender disparities still exist. This is seen especially in regard to women participation in top decision-making positions where females suffer from discrimination, preventing them from occupying high ranking positions (Rezai-Rashti, 2011). The fact that women are under-represented in senior administrative positions, such as Chancellor, Vice Chancellor, deans of

faculties, directors of institutes and heads of departments in higher education is well recognized in research (Dominici *et al.,* 2009).

In the United States the role of women has changed dramatically in the last 50 years as the proportion of women attending college, matriculating from graduate schools and obtaining doctorate degrees has increased dramatically (Laff, 2006). According to Cooper Jackson (2000) women are no longer associated with low expectations both in education and the workforce but instead constitute nearly half of the U.S. labor force and occupy a significant and growing proportion of entry and mid-level managerial positions. In addition, women make up to 50.8 % of the US population, and are 52% of the US professional workforce (Census 2014; Catalyst 2013). Women now seek to obtain the highest leadership roles in education, professions, and business (Laff, 2006). The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2007) report the following percentages of women in managerial positions, by ethnicity: Whites, 39%; African Americans, 31%; Asians, 46%; and Latinas, 22% whereas in 2005, women filled only 2.5% of top offices (Catalyst, 2006). Women accounted for only 14.7% of Fortune 500 corporation board seats in 2005; of these positions, 79% were held by White women, and 21% were held by women of color (Catalyst, 2013). In 2012, women accounted for more than half of all workers within several industry sectors - financial activities (53 %), education and health services (75 %), leisure and hospitality (51 %), and other services (52 %). The equal representation, however, ends at leadership positions since women consist of only 14.6 % of executive officers, 8.1 % of top earners, and 4.6 % of Fortune 500 CEOs (Catalyst 2013). The Census Bureau for the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2013) also indicates that in 2012, women accounted for 52% of all workers employed in management, professional, and related occupations (BLS Reports May, 2014).

In the United Kingdom, women's entry into education, academic and professional arena follows a similar trend to the US for the UK literature shows an increase of women's entry into tertiary education and academia. Singh (2002) asserts that the percentage of women professors in developing and developed Commonwealth countries range from 10 to 20 %, with the average of 13, 1% of which UK had 11,2% female professors by then. According to the statistics given by Gumbi (2006) out of 4 000 professors in higher education in the UK, over the past decade , 13% were women and 87% men while 73% of senior lectures and researchers (total of 24,630) were male and 27% female. Women hold 17% of professorships, and only 19.3% of presidents (vice chancellors) of colleges and universities. This demonstrates that leadership in higher education is still a man's world and universities are male-dominated institutions while women

continue to bear the primary domestic responsibility, irrespective of other work commitments (Kargwell, 2008).

 Morley and Singh take this further to indicate that the proportion of female students (55%) and graduates (59%) in the EU exceeds that of male students, but women represent only 18% of professoriate and in 70% of the Commonwealth's 54 countries, all universities were led by men in 2007 (Morley *et al.,* 2005; Singh, 2008). In 2009/10, men continued to dominate the highest academic positions, such as the professoriate by 80.9% while women's representation stood at 19.1%. In the same period, as Blandford shows, the overall women representation stood at 44% while men constituted 55.7% of academic staff in non-manager roles, although, men also constituted 72.0% of academic staff in senior management roles (Blandford *et al.,* 2011). Even after 2010, literature continues to show male domination in academic staff members in universities. The 2012 higher education funding council for England report shows that in 2010 to 2011 most academics were male (57%) and female academics were concentrated in less senior roles (Blandford *et al.,* 2011).

Like in the US and the UK, women in Portugal are reported to have been increasing their participation in higher education (HE) as students, but this is not matched by the number of women in senior management and high academic positions, such as in the professoriate. Several studies have highlighted the complexities of gender relations and their evolution. Recent market and managerial-driven changes in higher education have the potential to affect the traditional gender-structural composition of academic career. According to the literature, Portugal has a high level of female participation in academia, even though they are less represented in senior leadership positions when compared with other developed countries (catalyst, 2013).The literature goes further to demonstrate disciplines wherein women are concentrated and it shows gendered differences in the choice of disciplines. Women are said to be concentrated in 'soft areas', such as humanities and arts, and are least present in 'hard' sciences or engineering. Statistics given by Carvalho and Santiago (2008) indicate the percentage of women in early and middle careers as between 39% trainee assistants and 45% assistant but at the top, in academia, this percentage decreases to 32% of associate professor and 22% full professor this verifies the point that women's representation in senior management positions is very low.

African countries seem to be no exception to the trend where the situation is further complicated by traditional barriers. Shabaya and Kwandwo (2004) state that deep-seated cultural barriers have conspired to create and perpetuate gender disparity in access to education in many

African countries. Kellogg, Hervy, and Yizengaw, (2008) emphasize that higher education provides the means through which women and other historically-disadvantaged groups can achieve positions of leadership and increase their economic well-being, thereby, having a long-term impact on overall productivity and equality of opportunity. Nguyen (2013) contends that higher education supplies the best resources for the labor force; it influences current leaders and prepares future leaders so women should be visible in higher education. Scholars argue that leadership self-efficacy pertains to the confidence that one has in his/her knowledge, skills and abilities to lead others and accomplish various leadership tasks (Hannah & Harms, 2008; Paglis, 2010).

Literature on Africa seems to portray a more complicated scenario with regards to gender disparities in HEIs. Women, like in developed countries, outnumber men in universities in several African countries but their domination is confined at lower positions (Davidson & Burke, 2011). Salo (2003) found out that across regions, cultures and nations women were under-represented at all levels in African universities and were concentrated in traditionally female fields such as education. Despite much increased training and development, and increasing years of work experience necessary for career advancement women seem to experience a glass ceiling especially with regards to the professorial level and in senior management (Maseko, 2013). It can therefore be said women remain discriminated against in terms of accessing top management/leadership positions as well as the professoriate

Tanzania, same as the above mentioned countries, also faces gender disparities in institutions of higher learning. Literature illustrates that patriarchal, non-conducive organizational culture and management practices discourage women from entering academia (Mukangara, 2013). According to a study conducted by Mukangara (2013) at the University of Dar es Salaam, the statistics from the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology published in July 2007 indicated that out of 951 PhD holders teaching in all Tanzanian universities, only 11% were women; secondly, out of 1,321 academic staff with master's degrees, only 261 (20%) were female and thirdly, when more than 98% of the accredited universities in Tanzania were surveyed females were under-represented in educational leadership in higher learning institutions. It is important to note also that there is only one female vice chancellor out 26 in Tanzanian universities. The trends also indicate that the majority of female academic staff are Assistant Lecturers and Lecturers. 8% of Associate Professors and Full Professors are female, only 27 (21.4%) of the 126 academic staff who completed their PhD and Masters Studies during that period were female. The University of Dar es Salaam has achieved much in addressing

the gender balance amongst students but despite these efforts, however, achieving a gender balance at the university remains a challenge amongst the teaching and research staff.

The status of women in higher education in Ghana is of major concern just like the above mentioned countries. Data provided by the National Council on Tertiary Education (2006), however, reveals that in the 2000/2001 academic year, there were only 12% women in the faculties of the six public universities in Ghana; in 2005/2006. Adusah-Karikari (2008) reveals that most issues regarding tertiary education that are discussed in Ghana deal with financing higher education and making universities economically independent. In the 2006 statistics, women associate professors were 2.3% of academic staff and women full professors were 0.7% of academic staff. More than 60% of female academics are in the lecturer grade as opposed to less than 50% of men. Only about 5% of all women academics were professors as compared to 10% of men. In other words, women continue to be concentrated in lower ranks. According to Egunjobi (2009) the percentage of women employed as full time academic staff in Ghana is a total 9.5%

 South Africa is not different from these other countries when it comes to gender inequalities. Since the 1994 educational reforms in South Africa, including the National Plan for Higher Education (Ministry for Education 2001) the country has attempted to "provide a system of education that builds democracy, human dignity, equality and social justice" (Department of Education, 2001). Gender inequality in the South African educational system, however, still persists.   Girls tend to be predominantly present in the social and caring fields of education while even the participation rate of boys has even declined in these female-dominant fields of education due to deeply lodged gendered assumptions in organizational practices, parental influence and the lack of gender-sensitive vocational guidance programs for male students.

The challenge outlined above permeates all South Africans institutions, including institutions of Higher Education. This sector has its own challenges with regards to representation of women in senior management. Although women constitute over 50% of the higher education workforce in South Africa, they are still under-represented in senior positions (HERS-SA, 2007). Gumbi (2006) notes that in 2003 the average number of women in senior management was roughly 24% across all the17 institutions of higher learning. At the time there were only three women Vice-Chancellors; 82% of the professors were male. Despite HERS-SA's efforts, statistics show little improvement, particularly for women educators in high-level positions. In 2007, women representation had not improved, 13% of the vice-chancellors, 21% of the deputy vice-chancellors, 21% of the registrars and 21% of executive directors, 24% of professors and

associate professors in South Africa were women (Council on Higher Education 2009 statistics); the percentage of women VCs remains the same, currently.

In spite of efforts at transforming both the country and the public service to embrace national priorities of development and economic growth, challenges persist for women across the public and private sectors (Fagenson, 2003). For example, while women have the potential and ability to be leaders, they often lack opportunities, resources and support for realizing their potential. The lack of women in senior positions means that women are globally under-represented across all decision-making fora (Dunne & Sayed, 2007).

Younger female academics face challenges positioning themselves as authentic and secure (Archer, 2008; Šadl, 2009). Feelings of inauthenticity and insecurity are exacerbated by age, gender, status and a performative ethos where the right products (research outputs and grants) are an essential part of the institutions (Archer, 2008); women are pressured to enhance their research status and reputation.

Although globally a lot has been done to make sure that women feature at all levels of governance, they are still under-represented in many government organizations, mostly in positions of authority and leadership (De La Rey, 2005). For example in Africa, statistics obtained by Sadie (2005) on the Southern African Development Community (SADC) parliamentary structures show that the targeted 30% representation of women in political and resolution-making structures in member states was not met except in South Africa and Mozambique. It is however important to note that the South African government has shown commitment to addressing issues of gender discrimination against women by ratifying the terms of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in 1996. This was an attempt to curtail gender bias and to ensure that women are not discriminated against in any form. The policy shows government's effort to eliminate discrimination, particularly in rural contexts (World Bank, 2005). The South African constitution also provides for several channels to assist women in accessing resources and to actively participate in the economy. Women however face challenges in accessing these resources.

1.3. Gender Equality Instruments

There are several instruments that address gender inequality and these are international, regional and national. In the discussions that follow I detail them starting with the international - the CEDAW, the Beijing Platform for Action, the SADC regional instrument and for the national

instruments - the constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 0f 1996 and the Employment Equity Act No 55 of 1998.

1.3.1. International Instruments

The CEDAW

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) of 1979 was the first international instrument to comprehensively address women's rights in the realms of politics and culture as well as in economic, social and family spheres (Hassim, 2009). The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women binds all state parties to work actively towards the abolition of gender discrimination. CEDAW has been ratified by the South African government in 1996 and it contains a comprehensive set of legally enforceable commitments and imposes obligations on the state concerning both rights to education and to gender equality. The Convention further seeks to end discrimination against women and girls in education.

Article 10 of the CEDAW specifically requires state parties to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure them equal rights with men in the field of education. It plays a crucial role in fighting against gender equality; it is a tool for eliminating any stereotyped concept of the roles of men and women at all levels and in all forms of education by encouraging co-education and other types of education which will help to achieve this aim and, in particular, by the revision of textbooks and school programmes and the adaptation of teaching methods. In addition, it aims at bringing the same opportunities for access to programmes of continuing education, including those in adult and functional literacy particularly those aimed at reducing, at the earliest possible time, any gap in education existing between men and women. It urges countries that traditionally bar or discourage girls from attending school to open the doors to their education and for women to be given equal treatment with men (CEDAW: 2008). This instrument, therefore, removes barriers that have historically kept female students from participating in many career and vocational programmes.

Furthermore in Article 11, it articulates the right to non-discrimination in the work place by encouraging all states to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of employment in order to ensure, equality of men and women so that all parties have the same rights. These include - the right to the same employment opportunities, the application of the same criteria for selection in matters of employment, the right to free choice of profession and employment, the right to promotion, job security, all benefits and

conditions of service as well as the right to receive vocational training and retraining, apprenticeships, advanced vocational training and recurrent training (CEDAW, 2008). Benedek, *et al.,* (2002: 33) says CEDAW constitutes the central and most comprehensive bill of human rights for women.

The Beijing Platform for Action

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action was a product of the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace, convened by the UN from 4 to 15 September 1995 in Beijing, China. The Beijing Declaration notes in paragraph 44 that unequal access to education by women (including girls) is a critical area of concern and thus calls upon governments, the international community and civil society organizations to take strategic action in addressing inequalities, inadequacies and unequal access to education and training. In paragraph 69, the Beijing declaration states that education is a human right and an essential tool for achieving the goals of equality, development and peace. Non-discriminatory education benefits both girls and boys and thus ultimately contributes to more equal relationships between women and men. Equality of access to and attainment of educational qualifications is necessary if women are to become agents of change. Investing in formal and non-formal education and training for girls and women with its exceptionally high social and economic return has proved to be one of the best means of achieving both sustained and sustainable development and economic growth.

The Beijing platform for action also advocates against discrimination in the work places through enacting and enforcing legislation to guarantee the rights of women and men to equal pay for equal work.

1.3.2. Regional instruments

In August 2008, the Heads of State of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) adopted the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, committing their governments and countries, *inter alia*, to enhancing access to quality education by both women and men and removing gender stereotypes from the curriculum, career choices and professions. On employment issues, the Protocol, in article 19 notes that States parties shall, by 2015, review, amend and enact laws and policies that ensure women and men have equal access to waged employment in all sectors of the economy as well as the eradication of occupational segregation and all forms of employment discrimination. SADC members have committed themselves to 50/50 representation in all senior decision-making positions in the public and private sectors by

2015. For effective and efficient change or outcome, innovative policies are required, not only for them to be drafted but implementation has to be done; it has been long time since the policies were drawn and redrawn but their implementation is still failing.

1.3.3. National instruments

The South African government in response to international as well as regional instruments has put in place a comprehensive legal framework to address gender inequality with set goals that aimed at gender equality and women's empowerment. Currently, the South African parliament stands at 45% women and is second in Africa after Rwanda in terms of women representation in parliament (Stats S.A, 2014). In this section the South African national instruments will be discussed.

The constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 0f 1996

The Republic of South Africa has a democratic constitution which was drafted and passed in 1996. As the highest authority in the country, the South Africa Act 108 of 1996 is the most important guiding document to prescribe and lay foundations for the elimination of all discriminatory practices in the country. Section 9(3) of the constitution guarantees that everyone is equal before the law, has a right to equal protection and the benefit of the law and the state may not unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on any grounds such as race, gender and culture. In addition, everyone has the right to basic as well as to further education which the state through reasonable measures must make progressively available and accessible.

Employment Equity Act No 55 of 1998

The main purpose of the Employment Equity Act, No 55 of 1998 is to achieve equity in the workplace by promoting equal opportunity and fair treatment in employment through elimination of unfair discrimination. The Act calls for the implementation of affirmative action, measures to redress the disadvantages in employment experienced by designated groups, in order to ensure equitable representation in all occupational categories and levels in the workforce (Amos, *et al.* 2004). South Africa has been trying to address the under-representation of women in the workplace by encouraging organizations to diversify their workforce and implement corrective labour policies, such as the Employment Equity Act (EEA) No 55 of 1998 and Affirmative Action. Maqubela (2013), however, argues that the government has taken a 'short cut' approach to address gender inequality at the workplaces. She further contends that the "legislation seem to

address only women representation rather than dealing with the root of the problem which is embedded in gender and power relations".

According to the report of 2003, the achievement of the EEA in South Africa has been slow with some organizations failing to achieve their targets while some organizations simply played a' game of numbers'. Mello (2008) indicates that one of the most significant problems facing the South African human resource is the non-implementation of the EEA. The implementation of EEA has been focusing on numbers for the South African universities face serious challenges with targets achieved at the expense of appointing suitable academic personnel with strong grasp of teaching and research (Sebola & Khalo 2010).

A number of legislation has been passed in the new democratic South Africa but gender inequality and unfair treatment in organizations are still evident (Esterhuizen & Martins, 2008). Esterhuizen in Mathur-Helm (2005) suggests possible reasons why this could be the case; these include lack of commitment from management to effectively implement and manage employment equity legislation, the inability to manage workplace diversity appropriately and failure to fully accept and treat women fairly and equally in the workplace.

1.3.4. Institutional policies on work life balance and gender equality

Organizational employment equity policy

This section analysis the policies that the University of Venda uses to address inequalities, the gender equality policy and promotion criteria. Gender issues are gradually gaining credibility in the South African society. Until recently, efforts to bring gender issues into public awareness were met with significant resistance by the patriarchal South African society (Moodie, 2010). University level institutions joined in this effort including the University of Venda which launched a Gender Equity Unit in 1996 and established equity and sexual harassment policies in May 2009 to create a more formalized support structure in advancing gender issues.

The University of Venda (Univen) as a designated employer applies employment equity policy to all staff appointed on permanent and fixed terms, part-time staff as well applicants. The University also acknowledges that there is inadequate diversity in its workforce therefore the policy is designed to rectify the past imbalances by consciously developing and implementing an employment equity plan (Policy on Employment Equity, 2015). The policy focuses on the following: recruitment, selection and placement of staff, promotion of staff, utilisation and management of diversity, promotion and advancement of equal opportunities, elimination of unfair discrimination and the implementation of focused affirmative-action strategy. In order to

redress the past imbalances created by discriminatory legislations through affirmative action, the employment equity policy ensures that competent people from designated groups are represented. The Univen policy also states that it creates opportunities for promotion of current employees from designated groups who meet the requirements as well as developing relevant criteria for selecting suitably qualified persons for appointment, transfer and promotions (Policy on Employment Equity, 2015). The policy is to be reviewed after five years.

The promotion criteria

The University of Venda has got a promotional policy that spells out the criteria for promotion of both academics and administrations staff members. The promotion criteria only apply from Senior Lectureship to Associate Professor and from Associate Professor to Professor. As for the promotion from junior lecturer to lecturer and lecturer to senior lecturer the kind of promotion used is the progression process whereby the position should be developmental (Appointment and promotions criteria for academic staff, May 2011). In order for a junior lecturer to be promoted to lecturer one should obtain a master's degree within 4years of employment and the promotion usually takes effect 1st of April following the year of obtaining the masters. Staff members who are at lecturer position to be promoted to senior lecturers should obtain a doctoral degree using staff development policies.

However they are cases whereby a lecturer can be promoted to senior lecturer without a doctoral degree but by going through relevant committees for consideration and at least having published on article in a peer reviewed accredited journal (Appointment and promotions criteria for academic staff, May 2011). Below is a table that fully indicates the criteria for appointment and promotion for the academic staff in all schools

Table 3: Criteria for appointment and promotion for the academic staff in all schools

	Jnr lecturer	Lecturer	Snr lecturer	Assoc prof	Professor
Qualifications	Honors degree in the	Master's degree,	Doctoral degree / In	Doctoral degree	Doctoral degree

	relevant field: 4years professional qualification or 3 year qualification plus an Advanced Diploma in area of specialization	Appointment in the professional fields will be subject to registration with the relevant professional bodies	exceptional cases a MA degree in the relevant field coupled with at least 10 years teaching	Appointment in the professional field will be subject to registration with the relevant professional bodies	Appointment in the professional field will be subject to registration with the relevant professional bodies
Teaching experience	Good communication skills and Teaching approach/ methods of assessing students	At least 3years teaching experiences at a tertiary institution/ 5years professional experience in relevant field. Outstanding teaching experience at a tertiary institution on academic	At least 5 years teaching experience at tertiary institution, or 7 years professional experience in the relevant field	At least 10 years teaching experience in tertiary institution or 7 years professional experience in the relevant field	At least 10 years teaching experience in tertiary institution or 7years professional experience in the relevant field

Scholarship / Research and Creative Work	Evidence of registration for a MA degree or engagement in research such as Honors mini dissertation	Publications in peer reviewed and or non-peer reviewed journals will be a strong recommendation	At least 5 publications in accredited, peer reviewed journals. Evidence of supervision of 5 postgraduate students at Honours level and masters level	At least 10 years teaching experience in tertiary institution or 7years professional experience in the relevant field	

Jnr-junior, Snr-senior, Prof-professor

1.4. Problem statement

Even after two decades of democracy, South African women still face an uphill struggle compared to their male counterparts in the workplace, including HEIs. The South African government has institutionalized gender equality, however, this has been overshadowed by patriarchy which continues to prevail even after all the years of democracy.

Despite a relatively progressive legislation adopted by the South African government, including the Constitution (1996) and the Employment Equity Act (1998) which address gender inequality, traditional gender stereotypes and discrimination remain deeply rooted in society and workplace (Maqubela, 2013).

Women tend to enter the workplace, especially in academic professions, at levels similar to men, with similar credentials and expectations but as they try to progress in their career trajectory they get held back along the way (Annis, 2008). Women dominate in the lower level managerial ranks and are only marginally represented at the executive levels. They seem to reach a glass ceiling in the lecturer level of employment while men seem to find it easier to ascend further to professoriate level.

Universities in Limpopo faces similar problem and to this effect this study seeks to investigate challenges and experiences faced by women, particularly, with regards to promotion. There is limited research on the challenges and experiences of female academicians in the Limpopo universities; as a result there exists insufficient data to serve as the basis for rectifying the chronic gender imbalances in higher education institutions. This study aims to explore what holds women back from getting into higher positions in institutions of higher education.

1.5. Aim and objectives

The aim of the study is to explore challenges and experiences of female academicians in the higher education institution.

1.5.1 Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study are as follows:

To investigate gender representation at Univen.

To explore challenges faced by female academics at higher education institutions.

To examine attitudes of academicians towards Gender Equality at Univen.

1.5.2. Research Questions

This study aims to answer the following research questions:

How is gender representation at Univen?

What are the challenges faced by female academics at higher education institutions?

What are the attitudes of academicians towards Gender Equality at Univen?

1.6. Significance of the study

Examining or exploring the experiences of female academicians in the higher education institutions provides an important framework for understanding the ongoing chronic gender imbalances in universities of South Africa. The study seeks to contribute more in-depth and specific information to the policy makers in institutions of higher learning and government for evaluating and implementing policies of equal opportunities. This research will provide findings that could contribute towards gender policy development and/or subsequent reviews. It will also provide relevant information for developing workable strategies for harmonious co-existence of men and women without the dominance of one gender or discrimination. Additionally, the results could motivate the University policymakers to consider mounting programmes to adequately

prepare both women and men for management and leadership roles and responsibilities. This research will also fill in the gaps in the scholarly body of knowledge on the topic.

1.7. Definition of operational terms

Patriarchy

It is a system of social stratification and differentiation on the basis of sex, which provides material advantages to males while simultaneously placing severe constraints on the roles and activities of females. It has always been used to refer to the systematic organization of male supremacy and female subordination (Aina, 1998)

Gender

Gender refers to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys as well as the relations between women and those between men (Abdullah & Karthrin, 2010).

Gender roles

Gender roles are defined as a set of social behavioral norms that are generally considered appropriate for either a man or a woman in a social and interpersonal relationship. Gender roles are learned and they can change over time; they vary within and between cultures ((Schaeter, 2007; Williams, 2009).

Gender equality

According to the UN (2002), "equality is the cornerstone of every democratic society that aspires to social justice and human rights." Gender equality has been defined in multiple ways and has been the subject of great debate in the U.N. It often means women having the same opportunities in life as men, for instance, equality of access to education and employment, which does not necessarily lead to equality of outcomes. Gender Equality refers to "actions that guarantee women equal rights and the same opportunities as men in the public sphere" which implies that men and women are treated on the basis of sameness (Booth and Bennet, 2002).

Gender Stereotype

Gender stereotyping is defined as the belief that a set of traits and abilities is more likely to be found among one sex than the other; by stereotyping men as more efficient and achieving in work life, the important and valuable characteristics that women have, remain undervalued (Long, 2011).

Gender mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming is variously understood to entail mainstreaming equal opportunities, equal treatment, woman's perspective, gender perspectives and more recently, diversity. It is a systemic integration of the respective situations, priorities and needs of women and men in all policies and with a view to promoting equality between women and men; mobilizing all general policies and measures specifically for the purpose of achieving gender equality (Tiessen, 2007).

Standpoint theory

Feminist standpoint theory attempts to elaborate a feminist epistemology, or theory of knowledge, which is an important epistemological stool for constructing effective knowledge from the insights of women's experience (Hartsock, 2004). It will be further elaborated in the methodological chapter.

A barrier

According to Barrier (2010), a barrier is any obstacle that prevents forward movement or any event or condition that makes career progress difficult.

Glass Ceiling

Sinha and Sinha (2011) refers to 'glass ceiling' as any artificial barriers based on attitudinal or organizational bias in the workplace that prevent women from advancing to leadership position in their organizations.

Challenges

Challenges refers to a situation or something that needs great mental or physical effort in order to be done successfully and therefore tests one's ability (Cubillo & Brown, 2003) . In this study women are faced by the challenges, such as, ascending the professional ladders/ positions in Higher Education Institutions.

1.8. CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter provided a general introduction and background to the study. It discussed the under- presentation of female academics at Universities.   The chapter also posed the research problem, the aims, objectives and research questions that will underpin the study. Additionally, the significance of the study and definition of key terms are also tackled.   The next chapter reviews related literature.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This chapter reviews existing literature on gender mainstreaming in HEIs, and includes analyzing equality legislation and institutional policies, exploring gender experiences, perceptions and practices. According to Polit and Hungler (2010) the overall purpose of a literature review is to assemble knowledge on a topic regarding what is known or what has been studied about the area and where knowledge gaps exist. This chapter starts by exploring various theorizations on the topic under study.

2.2. Gender mainstreaming approach

The gender mainstreaming approach emerged in the 1980s and gained prominence when it was adopted by the UN Beijing Platform for Action (BPA), in the Fourth World Conference for Women (FWCW) in 1995, as the policy approach to address gender inequality across nations (Maqubela, 2013). In the 2000s, gender mainstreaming policies which incorporated a gender perspective to policies, programmes and projects, were introduced in South Africa. Gender mainstreaming, unlike other approaches that "targeted funding and reserved opportunities for women which often place women in opposition to men and sometimes in opposition to other women" shifts the focus from women to gender. The theory has been designed to challenge the rigid and deep-rooted cultural beliefs that perpetuate gender inequality, which to date appear to be a major challenge faced by South African society and its institutions (Hassim, 2009). Gender mainstreaming does not only seek only to transform the workplace but also other related domains such as the family and society at large, thus adopting 'displacement' approach in addressing gender inequality .

 Booth and Bennet (2002) claim that gender mainstreaming consists of three perspectives, namely, 'equal opportunities\ equal treatment in policies', 'the women perspective' and the 'gender perspective'. The 'women perspective' concerns special treatment such as maternity leave, given to women so that they can be equal to males. Gender perspective is formulated to recognize where policies might have a differential impact on women and men and to adjust the policies in question such that it promotes gender equality.

 However, gender mainstreaming has equally been met with opposition and resistance, mainly from men, as gender equality norms are introduced into institutional thinking and they compete with traditional norms (Walby, 2005). According to Lombardo and Meier cited in Maqubela (2013) South Africa, has adopted gender mainstreaming, taking the long agenda approach,

seeking to transform gender relations but legislating it as a "soft law". It is not legally binding, in that, there is "no allocation of economic and human resources, no time-table for action, no specific measures for implementing gender mainstreaming, monitoring its application, and sanctioning noncompliant actors" Maqubela (2013). Other authors such as Hassim (2009) argue that because of the lack of clarity in its conceptualization and objectives which results in difficulties in its implementation, its transformative potential is lost. Furthermore, according to other scholars, it has been difficult to use gender mainstreaming to transform masculine-oriented government institutions and patriarchal attitudes in both the government departments and rural communities (Booth and Bennet, 2002).The failure of gender mainstreaming to transform these institutions has been attributed to the fact that it is a foreign approach that has been associated with a transfer of the initiative from feminist activism to the state, and the associated use of bureaucratic technical approaches to address issues of gender oppression and inequalities (Maqubela, 2013).

South African feminists tend to question the capacity of gender mainstreaming in bringing about substantial institutional changes. As such it has adopted many approaches none of which aspires to destabilize or challenge the status quo, but rather to achieve mainly a gender balance in high positions, in politics and the workplace; which implies that this approach leaves other areas and domains intact and unaddressed (Maqubela, 2013).

2.3. Masculinities

Masculinities, relates to perceived notions and ideals about how men should or are expected to behave in a given society, Connell cited in Dewing (2007). There are several common aspects, including dominance, competitiveness, assertiveness, physical strength, aggression, risk-taking, courage, heterosexuality and lack of feminine traits that are attributed to men and masculinities. Femininity, on the other hand has been stereotyped as dependent, submissive and conforming, and because of that women have been seen as lacking in leadership qualities as traditionally, leadership has been associated with masculinity and the belief that men make better leaders than women (Rhode & Kellerman, 2007). However, other studies provide evidence that women are better leaders than men and this is attributed to their caring qualities such as kindness, patience, good listening skills which makes them more approachable than men (Maqubela, 2013). Gender division of labour has traditionally been associated men with breadwinner positions and women with homemaker positions and because of that women continue to face difficult challenges in climbing higher positions (Eagly & Wood, 2012). Women have always been dominated by men in workplaces because of this traditional view that a man is always the

financial provider of the family, which is also an important attribute for masculinities, while a woman is always considered as a house-keeper.

Additionally, when women occupy leadership positions, they are likely to encounter more disapproval due to perceived gender role violation (Paustian- Underdahl *et al.,* 2014). Although more women are assuming leadership roles today than before, the notion of women as a leader is still foreign to many individuals, both male and female alike (Paustian- Underdahl *et al.,* 2014). The assumption that leadership is equated with maleness is still deeply embedded and rooted in both our thinking and language. Leaders are often described with adjectives such as, competitive, aggressive and dominant, which are associated with masculinity. Paustian-Underdahl *et al.,* (2014) further states that these kinds of stereotypes, to date, still exert a powerful influence and are at least partially to blame both for women's difficulty in attaining leadership positions and for society's struggle to accept them in that position. According to Mazibuko (2006), the existing literature on under-representation of women in the senior levels of South African academia has argued that the centres of power and excellence in South African universities are dominated and influenced by men and masculinized cultures that make it difficult for women to enter and succeed at these terrains (Mathevula, 2014). Maqubela (2013) states that masculinity is considered to be natural, which however has been problematized through comparisons within and across cultures and seeing variations in the forms of masculinity from one context to another; masculinities are perceived as multiple, diverse, fragile, temporal and fluid. She further outlines that researchers have concluded that masculinity, as is the case with femininity is not at all given but is socially and historically constructed and fluid (Maqubela, 2013).

2.4. African feminism

African feminist theory is unique from other theories because of its distinct feature of considering men as part of its theorization. Mekgwe in Maqubela (2013) points out that this theory came into existence after other African feminists advocated for the retention of the concept of feminism with the argument that it should be indigenized to suit the African context. Maqubela (2013) continues that African feminism is there to address the gap between theory and practice and more accurately reflects African culture and activism in its theorization. She concurs with African feminists such as Nnaemeka and Mekgwe (2003; 2006) who challenged imperialism in feminist research and argued for the deconstruction of universalization in feminist knowledge production; they raised important questions about the issue of unequal power

relations in research and knowledge production/theory formation between the researcher and the researched (Maqubela, 2013).

2.5. Intersectionality theory

Parker cited by Davis (2013) explains intersectionality as a means for analyzing and interpreting the experiences that women encounter while climbing the academic ladder, as well as in holding higher positions. Intersectionality has been widely accepted and employed by most feminist theorists in their works to explain inequality. It is also important to note that feminist standpoint theory valorizes difference and intersectionality which accounts for the many ways women experience being a woman differently across varying cultures and histories and across race, class, sexuality and language (Stanley, 2009). According to the intersectionality theory, African women have a connection through race and gender within society and can identify with other African women from this perspective. Stanley (2009) relates that through intersectionality, the lived experiences of African-American women are not located within separate spheres of race, gender and social class. Intersectionality approaches arose from feminist scholarship, which recognized that there were important differences among women and men, as it looks at the intersections of forms of oppression of people. Feminist scholars such as Crenshaw in Davis (2013) argue that gender, race and class are interconnected as intersecting oppressions, whereas, Collins (2000) sees intersectionality as a particular way of understanding social location in terms of crisscross systems of oppression such as race, social class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, nation, and age which form mutually constructing features of social organization, which shape Black women's experiences.

The South African history of intersectionality started with the recognition of two vectors of oppression - race and class, and, later followed by ethnicity, which suggests that the recognition of gender came last (Maqubela, 2016). She argues that black women are uniquely situated in that they stand at the focal point where two exceptionally powerful and prevalent systems of oppression come together, which are, race and gender; intersectionality opens up the possibilities of seeing and understanding many more spaces of cross-cutting interests (Collins, 2000). Many feminist writers, such as Hassim quoted in (Maqubela 2013) reflect that intersectionality in South Africa, seem to have started from the development of a concept of "triple oppression" where race, gender and class were interpreted as additive. Hassim (1991) further notes that using the notion of "triple oppression," creates the idea of black women as quintessential, referring to them being triple oppressed. It means that the intersections between

and within these inequalities are overlooked. Maqubela (2013) further suggests that gender intersects and is embedded in class, race and ethnicity.

2.3. The challenges faced by women in higher education institutions

2.3.1 Perceptions on Gendered Differences in Leadership

In South Africa, perceptions on gender differences in the abilities of men and women as leaders are also considered to be marked by race. Black and coloured women face stereotyping that is rooted in their historical employment as maids in the homes of white employers. Sebola & Khalo (2010) explains that South Africa is heavily affected by the stereotyping that women are of weaker sex and can rarely succeed in leadership positions. Booysen and Maseko (2007;2013) suggest that there are subculture differences and similarities between South African men and women managers in retail banking whereby they argue that South African male managers concentrate on performance, competition and winning, power, control and directive leadership compared to their female counterparts. Grant (2005) posits that women leaders do not always get the necessary support from the communities and usually have to prove their capability as leaders under trying conditions in the patriarchal society.

Furthermore the problem of women under-represented in leadership positions seems to be an international one, because Glass Cliff (2008) reveals the fact that the proportion of women in paid employment is smaller than the proportion of men, globally. Gqubule (2001) also discovered that 7, 8% of men and 3, 3% of women are in top management positions. Siemienska in the reports from the Commission on Gender Equality (2004; 2005) argues that cultural factors influence the level of support for women candidates and also influence the electoral behavior of men and women, while deeply rooted traditional values very often pose serious obstacles to women's equality. Maccoby (2004) states that until recently the general perception of business management/leadership was structured and dominated by males whose leadership styles were hierarchal, action-orientated and even quasi-military whereas the ideal leader was seen as an independent, tough, individualistic hero.

Marthur-Helm, (2002) notes, that South African women face similar barriers when it comes to the advancement and upward mobility as their female counterparts in the rest of the world. South African career women find that in spite of being talented, educated and committed to their careers, misunderstanding and stereotyping potentially delay women's upward mobility. Women were not seen as potential leaders, and were often told that their leadership performance differs from traditional male leaders (Mathur-Helm, 2002). Those who agree with this view include

Posholi (2013) who indicates that female's reported that they did not feel that they were listened to and that when they spoke in meetings their comments and suggestions were ignored or belittled, but the same or similar comments and suggestions from men, made an impact. Lukaka (2013) also found out that obstacles such as discrimination, stereotyping, prejudice, family demands, and lack of opportunities for women on the path of becoming professors make them lose their drive to excel.

Traditionally, leadership has been associated with masculinity and the belief that men make better leaders than women but, however, the rise in feminist ideologies in recent years has weakened such strong opinions (Mollel & Tshabangu, 2014). Only now is it clear that women can gain admission to leadership positions. The number of women leaders has improved; especially in Africa over the last two decades after ratification of the Beijing conference in 1995, yet women representation and participation in the public sphere are still small. Tanye (2008) and Posholi; (2013) argue that the cultural structure of leadership in itself initiates difference as people tend to perceive men as being competent, skillful, aggressive and able to get things done; and thus ascribe leadership to men, while women are regarded as warm, expressive, quiet, gentle and lacking confidence.

Ngcongo, (1993) as cited by Maseko (2013) believes that in African culture men lead and women follow. Hitherto, factors such as culture and tradition cause women leaders to be mistrusted and not favoured (Mestry & Schmidt, 2012). Lumby (2003) contends that communities do not trust women to be even appointed as school managers because school management is an important job which demands seriousness which they believe only man could provide, as socially the man is always perceived as superior irrespective of circumstances. Egunjobi (2009) asserts that, some women were even refused employment despite the fact that they were qualified because it was felt that the women would be a distractive influence, for example, in the laboratory working in an all-male career. According to feminists, the traditional role of men as the sole breadwinner for the family is now being shared by his wife, but the wife's role as the home maker is usually not shared equally with her husband.

Due to masculinity and the belief that men make better leaders than women, Gumbi (2006) reports that women held 18.7% of full professorships and only 19.3% of presidencies (Vice-Chancellors of colleges and universities). It is obvious that men dominate the governance and management levels of institutions of higher education More poignant is the likelihood that women's interests in the institutions may not be sufficiently taken care of, and that women have

few or no role models and mentors, something that may have far reaching consequences in terms of developing future women leaders. In this light, it is surely vital to accept Cole's argument (2006) that women professors in higher education do not just appear out of nowhere. They have to be nurtured and developed appropriately through society. In other words, for women to excel and be on par with their male counterparts they have to receive opportunities and training equivalent to that of men. Ellison (2001) found that despite women and men having equal educational qualifications, women remain under-promoted in comparison with men, yet women are not physiologically or rationally disinclined to invest time, money or effort into the advancement of their careers in this sector.

In addition to the above, Dei (2006) observes that universities are traditionally viewed as centers of free thought and human advancement. But literature on leadership status of women in higher education shows that women are less likely than men to be part of upper levels of senior management. This is reiterated by Gumbi's findings which state that "leadership in higher education is still a man's world and universities are male-dominated institutions when it comes to leadership" (2006).

2.3.2. Barriers that woman face in institutions of higher learning

The training academy can provide individuals with the opportunities, resources and the impetus to reach their professional and personal potential, however, It is the responsibility of institutions of higher education to ensure that these opportunities and resources are available and that impediments to growth are minimized (Miller and Miller, 2002). Morley *et al*., (2005) contend that the university is seen by many equity theorists as an institution of contradictions, one that is complicit with social divisions at the same time that it offers mobility and opportunity. To support this point, Digeorgio-Lutz cited in Adusah-Karikari (2008) maintains that institutions of higher education have come to be viewed as essential for a democratic society and as a gateway to the good life. He continues that although universities are often perceived as ideal and neutral organizations where men and women can depend on their merits, this is not the case in most universities, including South African universities (Adusah-Karikari, 2008). This is confirmed by most researches/ literature which demonstrate that women in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) lag behind because of barriers that hinder their progression to senior management positions. Obonyo (2013) points out that, under-representation of women in senior management positions within educational institutions continue to be a matter of concern, particularly as the teaching force is largely dominated by women.

Adusah-Karikari (2008) contends that economic globalization has created a situation in which the most valued activities reflect individualist, rather than collective values, and competitive, rather than cooperative practices. Scholars are thus competing against each other in a culture that tends to benefit men more than women. This competitive atmosphere reduces the sense of community within institutions and is likely to emphasize those aspects of male culture that are seen as most hostile to women (Adusah-Karikari, 2008). From this review, one can conclude that the universities have contributed to and promoted the discriminatory practices that women experience in higher education today.

2.3.3. Motherhood

Some feminist researchers emphasize the oppressive function of the family in women's lives. The approach focuses on the passive and pathologizing function of traditional gendered roles such as motherhood (Stephenson, 2011). Motherhood has been portrayed as biologically determined, an essential component of womanhood and obligatory for all women. Kruger (2006) notes that motherhood is an important role for African women, they have been socialised through various medical and psychological discourses to believe that it is through motherhood and mothering that purpose and stability are given to their lives. Egunjobi (2009) exposes that women academics in Nigeria were denied maternity leave under the University Law and in some cases they were not allowed to get married or have children.

"It is presented as an ultimate expression of femininity and considered a woman's biological destiny that is inevitable and inherent in womanhood. On this basis, a woman is expected to desire to conceive and give birth as well as develop a bond with the children to whom she gives birth'' (Maqubela,2013:11).

Gillespie as cited in Clark (2012) explains that motherhood is defined as a feminine gender identity and women who choose not to be mothers are often subjected to social scrutiny and stigmatisation by those who consider motherhood as the natural state for all women. He further reflects that child-free women are also viewed as selfish, unfortunate, psychologically flawed, deviant and unnatural.

From literature, both men and women as academic professionals and parents struggle with the task of achieving a balance between work and family life, however the challenge for women is greater than for men, given the simple logistics of women's 'biological clock', the physical demands of pregnancy and childbirth and the gendered expectations of family obligations. Women's biological clocks often mean that decisions about marriage and children cannot be

delayed until after their careers have been well established. Dozens of studies document women's struggle to balance career and family. A survey Rosser conducted in 2004, for example, found that among 450 female scientists and engineers employed at research universities, more than 70% cited the need to balance career and family as the most significant challenge facing their professional advancement

In addition, due to family attachment most women tend to be reluctant to take higher position especially the ones that require their full time attention. Egunjobi (2009) concludes that most women are not prepared to take career advancements that will take them away from their husbands and children; given a choice between career advancement in places away from the family and staying with ones' family in lower positions, most women would prefer the latter even though this would have been their greatest opportunity to break the glass ceiling. Tamir (2007) adds that women's dual responsibilities may also slow down their professional advancement, as they are perceived as incapable of investing adequately in high-ranking, demanding positions as a result of putting their family first. On the other hand Philipsen, (2008) states that, these same women suggest that all of their time is focused on achieving tenure or promotion and no time is available for networking, having fun, or dating.

Kiamba (2008), however, is of a different view as he argues that besides being mothers and wives, many women now play key roles in studying, work and managerial structures of public and private organisations. For most women, in addition to the positions they hold in universities, they remain the primary caretakers for their families (Lukaka, 2013). As time constraints and demands of a job become more demanding upon them, promotion forces many women to choose between family and career.

The 2010 Women Matter Report by McKinsey and Company notes that among female executives, middle managers and CEOs acknowledged the challenges of balancing work and domestic responsibilities and labeled this the "double burden" syndrome. Unfortunately, failure to effectively find a work-life balance has been cited as one of the reasons women fail to successfully progress into senior managerial positions and why some may decide to change their careers (Mathur-Helm, 2006; Sealy, 2010).

2.3.4. Multiple roles

The multiple roles/tasks that women do are considered as barrier to their career advancement. Hui, (2014) found out that the expectation of long hours was a significant barrier to seeking promotions for many women, in the universities. Omar and Ogenyi's (2004) research on the

experiences of women lectures in Nigeria revealed that these women have the challenge of fulfilling societal and cultural roles in addition to their role as lectures. Most of these women lectures are wives and mothers who have to find a way to balance their work and family life, and unfortunately, sometimes, women end up having role conflict (Maseko, 2013). Lukaka, (2013) states that, for many women, in addition to the roles they hold in universities, they remain the primary caretakers for their families which makes it difficult for them to climb higher in academia as it will demand more of their time and attention.

This line of argument has been further developed by Ndangarembwa cited in Maseko (2013) when she pointed out that women have the potential to bring about transformation, but they lack organization due to lack of time, given their multiple roles as bread winners, wives and mothers'). That is the reason many resort/choose to place family demands before their personal aspirations and end up compromising their abilities and accepting less demanding and prestigious jobs that will allow them to maneuver through their multiple tasks (Egunjobi, 2009). Some scholars, such as Baker and Saville (2008; 2014) hold a different view and posit that women academics, who are married to academic men, are likely to increase their productivity and that it is a supportive atmosphere that encourages advancement of academic women.

Sousa (2013) is of the same view that, it is women who experience the highest levels of conflict between work and family, since they are still expected to perform the bulk of family and household responsibilities. To sustain this point, Molebatsi cited in Posholi (2013) gives a report that in Lesotho, girls receive more education than boys, but still they often fall into gender-specific roles of wife and mother once they complete school and are torn between work and family. These activities are time consuming and deny female staff opportunities for research and publishing which is the main reason why female professors are still of a limited number. Although men are increasingly expressing interest in a more balanced role in their work and family, it is women who still experience the highest levels of conflict between their dual roles, since women are still expected to perform the bulk of family and household tasks (Posholi, 2013).

Mama (2003) and Zulu (2009) admit that women academics often have to divide their attention and time between childbearing, childrearing and a career. Female heads of academic departments then, unlike ordinary women lecturers, experience a 'triple' role conflict. Scholars have argued that women and men experience higher education differently and that social relations within the educational institutions depict inequalities in the operations of power as is evident in the statistics on access, employment, decision-making bodies, welfare and capacity

to access research and professional opportunities (Mama, 2003; Zulu, 2009). On the other hand, Ward & Wolf-Wendel, (2004) are of the view that women must balance their multiple roles, in and out of the academy, with little in the way of institutional support. My own point of view is that this pattern is changing, even though albeit exceedingly slowly with more couples sharing domestic responsibilities and juggling careers with great ingenuity and frequently at great cost to personal relationships.

2.3.5. Support structures

Adding on the challenges women experience in their carrier advancement is the lack of support structures. Women have multiple roles to play and need support to help them find a suitable work-life balance. Reviewing other scholars' literature reveals that many women report a lack of pro-family public policies or support services such as child-care in some organisations and this continues to put pressure on women to balance their work and family responsibilities (Jamali & Nejati, 2009). In a study conducted by Mupambirei (2013) she states that women in academia also acknowledged the importance of emotional support they received from colleagues and their superiors.

It is important to note that there are some organisations that are providing social and organisational support to their women managers; some universities and public service organisations made provisions for friendlier working conditions, such as flexi-time, part-time work and career breaks and family-friendly work practices which are highly valued (Mupambirei, 2013). In addition, most lecturers were also granted laptops which enabled them to work successfully away from the office. There was also a variety of women networks and mentoring programmes (mostly in universities) which provided women managers with emotional, personal and organisational support as well as advice and guidance. In some organisations, however, women were not fully aware that these programmes were available and end up finding their own mentors only in times of stress (Mupambirei, 2013).

2.3.6. Lack of female role models/mentors

As women are trying to penetrate the traditionally male-dominated professions, the scarcity of successful women role models to learn from becomes a challenge say Chesterman *et al.*, cited in Mupambirei (2013). The lack of mentoring and adequate role models for female academics is pervasive in universities. There is a paucity of senior female mentors who can coach, sponsor, protect and increase exposure and visibility of junior female academics (Chitsamatanga, 2014). Role models are vital and contribute significantly to the advancement of women into

management positions. Mentoring is the chief means by which female academics can be prepared to advance their careers in academia while noting that they are also likely to befit from psychosocial mentoring. Interacting with role models is a fruitful way to inspire women to aspire to great things, and therefore the lack of women in senior positions who mentor and encourage other women is the single most important issue facing women in institutions of higher learning (Maseko, 2013). Hobbler, Lemmon, & Wayne (2011) assert that, women may feel unprepared for senior level positions and, thus, might not apply due to the lack of more experienced female mentors to guide them through the processes of achieving the senior positions. Posholi (2013) is of the same opinion that lack of mentoring is a barrier to women's career advancement. The 2010 Women Matter Research Report by McKinsey and Company also indicates that women across the globe revealed the lack of women role models as one of the challenges they faced as a barrier to career development.

Hoyt and Blascovich cited in Mupambirei (2013) emphasize that role models are essential because by presenting many examples of successful women leaders, more women will be encouraged to have more positive responses to stereotyped threats; many people, including professional women, prefer to have mentors of the same gender because they tend to understand the challenges most commonly faced. This is supported by Marcus (2013) who says seeing women in particular, anywhere in the world; succeeding in an ever widening array of roles helps inspire young women to broaden their expectations for their own possibilities. In the work of Maseko (2013), role models play a major role in the professional development of all individuals, regardless of gender, hence, the lack of women in senior positions is one of the major issue facing women in the workplace.

In addition, role models serve to provide advice and encourage confidence in others. Renton and Mupambirei (2009; 2013) also add that having a role model or mentor also helps women deal with role conflict and any uncertainties they may have in their work. Having supportive role models has also been found to improve women managers' leadership confidence (McKinsey & Company, 2010; Mupambirei, 2013).

2.3.7. Low-self-esteem and lack of confidence of women

Literature further reveals low-self-esteem and lack of confidence as one of the greatest obstacles that stand in the way of women's success. Lam cited in Murniati (2012) agree that many women cannot achieve higher leadership positions because of their own lack of self-confidence, the pressure to maintain a professional image and in their ability to lead. Women also show more reluctance to be involved in the competition games and to apply for promotion

(Maseko, 2013). In order, therefore, to aspire to management positions, women have first to address their own self-perceptions and the limits they have learned, or internalized, as members of a powerless and oppressed group. Ilagan-Bian in Njiru (2013) adds that for females to obtain higher positions they have to work harder in order to be noticed and to prove that they can handle the job, the family as well as everything else. McCormick *et al.* (2002) cited in Mupambirei (2013) conducted a quantitative research to assess gender differences on leadership self-efficacy levels and on experiences with leadership roles. They found that overall, women reported lower leadership confidence or leadership self-efficacy than men, despite having similar education and work experience with their male colleagues.

Princeton's 2013 study describes gender imbalances as grounded in behavioural differences and asserts that due to women's low self-esteem, they undersell themselves and fail in interviews for top positions or do not seek them at all. In a research by Grogan and Shakesheft (2011) based in the US, it was claimed that women do not lack confidence in their abilities and that they do aspire to most administrative positions, but institutional racism and sexism persist and discourage women's move into leadership. This statement is supported by Uwizeyimana (2014) who opines that if women cannot enter high power positions, it is not due to the way in which they have been socialized as females, but because they are locked into low-powered jobs by the male-dominated system itself; where by "men advance to higher levels because they are favoured in promotional practices, and women cannot advance even if they wanted to" because the system which favours their male counterparts does not favor them (Uwizeyimana 2014). He further argues that women do in fact actively seek management positions, are prepared and readily available to occupy these positions but however it is the conditions accompanying promotions, and selection procedures that are managed largely by men, which prevent women from seeking and obtaining high level positions.

Women also lack confidence in other women to the extent that they would not vote for their fellow women who are capable of holding leadership positions. Ndangarembwa in Maseko (2013) supports the above statement by stating that one of the reasons there are few women in positions of power is a lack of unity among women themselves. She further adds that the reason behind that was the fact that women since they are vying for limited resources have a tendency to see other women as a menace and are envious of one another. Women have reservations about whether another woman will perform as well as a man even if she has demonstrated leadership talent. Uwizeyimana (2014) however also argues that both men and women do not support women who want to hold higher positions because they are generally not ready to be

led by women. He adds that equality at the work place can thus only come about when women themselves change, when they become better educated, more motivated, and more skilled (Uwizeyimana, 2014).

2.3.8. Gender stereotyping

According to Powell and Graves (2003) across cultures the male stereotype was perceived as stronger as and more active than the female stereotype. The male stereotype was characterised by high needs for dominance, autonomy, aggression and achievement, whereas the female stereotype was characterized by high needs for deference, nurturance and affiliation (Powell and Graves 2003). Mathevula (2014) states that stereotyping and prejudices are related to the abilities and attitudes of woman towards their advancement; she says many women to a certain degree internationalized the attitudes and role expectation about them hence they fit neatly into the stereotype. This is supported by her comment, which she said that in a society where men are more likely to be leaders and where women have been stereotyped into playing a subordinate and supportive role, it is not entirely surprising that women are less likely to plan a career that includes leadership. She continues that, these stereotypes undoubtedly carry with them negative consequences as they undermine any perceptions on the part of members of a society of women possessing competence and power (Mathevula, 2014). For instance, women who choose to behave in a confident, aggressive, or independent manner are seen by the society as behaving inappropriately in terms of the societal gender norm. This creates social dissonance for women as well as unfavourable impression of women given the fact that such gender norms seem to suggest that women should not demonstrate the same kinds of aggressive, confidence, and independent behaviour as their male counterparts.

Morley (2013) has the view that, although, many women are educated they need a certain disposition, and experiences to be successful and effective as academic executives and in managerial roles. Many universities associate masculine characteristics with success and achievement which include assertiveness, aggressiveness, and task-oriented leadership abilities (Envick, 2008). Mathevula, (2014) found that men tend to perceive women who succeed in managerial positions as being less physically attractive; 'unfeminine' and as possessing gender problems; this is due to the stereotypical assumption that women are less competent than men to handle managerial positions

Traditionally, men had more access to research and publishing networks as well as more domestic support to facilitate research and get better promotional prospects while women were directed into caring, helping pastoral roles within the universities which limited their opportunities

for self-advancement. Bagihole in Adusah-Karikari (2008) argues that women have an unequal chance when attempting to enter the academic profession and when they finally climb the ladder, they are promoted more slowly than men.

Similarly, Luke (2001) indicates that the initial appointment of women to lower classification levels puts them at a structural disadvantage by increasing the time needed to ascend academic ladders and by reducing their access to influential committees and senior researchers with whom they might network and collaborate. Valerio (2009) adds that stereotyping is destructive to both males and females and are responsible for the erection of the glass ceiling.

2.3.9. Gender discrimination

In addition to gender stereotypes another factor which has been found to act as an obstacle to female academics advancing to management positions is gender discrimination which involves treating someone unfavorably because of that person's sex (Mathevula, 2014). In any society, gender discrimination occurs when sexes are not treated equally. Lipinge cited in Mathevula (2014) suggests that the problem of gender discrimination is even more serious in the context of traditional African societies where very little substantive change has taken place in the lives of Southern African women despite the existence of a substantial number of documents, generated by both the Africa Union (AU) and the Southern African Development Communities (SADC) which have either, direct or indirectly, provided for gender equality. Gender discrimination is said to persist because many organisations are systematically structured for male dominance and associate management with maleness, which in turn leads to reluctance on the part of male-dominated management to recognise or entertain the idea of female leadership, to discrimination, and a host of other challenges Mathevula (2014). Okechukwu *et al.,* cited in Mathevula (2014) argues that gender discrimination has also been found to promote harassment and possible workplace violence and although gender discrimination is evident among the South African society, it is illegal and several laws are in place to prevent and eliminate all discriminatory practices (South African Constitution, 1996).

2.3.10. Promotion criteria as a barrier to women carrier advancement

Most major universities and institutions are historically the dominion of a certain class of men, hence, universities practices and norms are constructed based on men's life experiences; these practices are well established and very difficult to change (Mohajeri, 2015). Women have entered in large numbers in institutions of higher learning employment and have added

enormous contributions; still the balance of power within institutions is in favor of men. According to Airin (2010) consequently, female academics are often disadvantaged in pay and promotion. Poor policies on women and discrimination against women in selection and promotion are through the syndrome of supporting 'people like us' (Nguyen, 2013).

The purpose of gender equity programs and legislative actions such as Affirmative Action is to ensure that men and women receive equal treatment in recruitment, hiring, appointment, and promotion in higher education; however, these policies have not completely improved gender equity (Mohajeri, 2015). Policies and the processes of promotion in higher education can act as barriers against women advancing in senior/ management positions.

2.3.11. Research and publications

Publication is recognised all over the world as an integral part of an academic career, not only is it a pre-condition for academic promotion and advancement universally, it is a hall mark of true academics (Chitsamatanga, 2014). The issue of research publications is quite complex because of different institutional demands, discipline differences and the evaluation of research output. According to literature, research publication is viewed by most female academics as a barrier to their career development and a mysterious process simply because of failure to being exposed to a culture of research as a condition of employment until recently (Mabokela, 2002). According to Gaidzanwa in Chitsamatanga (2014) female academics do not do much research as compared to their male counterparts. This is supported by a report in the Mail & Guardian, April (2012), which reflect that male academics do most of the research in South Africa. Mamiseishvili & Rosser in Chitsamatanga (2014) indicate that being less productive in research puts female academics at a disadvantage in terms of career development in universities. In addition Mabokela cited in Chitsamatanga (2014) indicate that research publication is recognised globally as the crux of an academic profession and has become an essential requirement for career advancement and promotion.

Moreover, work and family conflict, lack of time by focusing on completing PhD studies, teaching, heavy workloads attribute to research as a barrier to career development of female academics (Chitsamatanga, 2014). She further argued that although teaching is vital in any learning institution, unfortunately female academics do not benefit fully from this because teaching cannot be compared to research and used as promotional aspect within universities. (Chitsamatanga, 2014). A research done by Barrett and Barrett (2013) found that female academics are given extra workload which is usually discreet, undetected and unchallenged by female academics. It may be concluded that the workload systems fail to raise awareness that

female academics are given roles that are not helpful in improving their research publication or promote their career mobility.

2.3.12. Organizational barriers

In addition, to the barriers of carrier advancement are the organizational or institutional barriers, which according to Posholi, (2013) also play a vital role in limiting women's advancement as they are often not structured to accommodate women's values. Organizational barriers refer to the organizational-level factors that affect the differential hiring and promotion of men and women. While these barriers vary significantly from organization to organization, they can create a huge roadblock preventing women from advancement to top management (Lukaka, 2013; Posholi, 2013).

2.3.13. Aversion to competition

Women's preference for non-competitive environments may limit their drive to contest in competitive corporate advancement process. Niederle and Vesterlund (2007), show that women prefer competitive engagements less than men of similar ability.

2.3.14. Glass ceiling

Due to the glass ceiling, women find it difficult to reach the top positions, as the glass ceiling forms a barrier to career advancement (Barreto, Ryan, & Schmitt, 2009). Glass ceiling is also considered as a glass cliff which gives women a precarious position making it hard to be successful (Barreto, Ryan, & Schmitt, 2009). It is a concrete wall that keeps women in functions unlikely to lead to senior levels. This is supported by Davis &Maldonado's 2015 reference to glass ceiling as a term to describe the artificial plateau, beyond which women and other minorities are denied opportunities to advance to upper levels of executive management, in the corporate world. Most women struggle to reach managerial positions in higher education and in career stages leading to a post in a university or college of higher education. Greyvenstein (2000) argues that in general women suffer discriminatory practices when promotions to senior positions are considered. Basu (2008) is of the view that, women face failure to be promoted to senior positions due to the perception that they are better suited to compassionate rather than decision-making roles. Similarly, Luke (2001) indicates that the initial appointment of women to lower-classification levels puts them at a structural disadvantage by increasing the time needed to ascend academic ladders, reducing their access to influential committees, to senior researchers with whom they might network and collaborate and to other women who could serve as role models or support and mentor them. Those who happen to succeed, report having

more constraints and less support than when they held lower-level positions resulting in both exhaustion and still feeling stuck. Ryan *et al.,* (2009) concur that when women receive support and encouragement as well as have training and development opportunities like men, women can also climb the corporate ladder.

2.4. Experiences and career progression of female academics in South African Universities

The fact that female academics in developed and developing countries continue to occupy a unique place within academia has positioned their experiences and career progression prospects to the margins (Hooks, 2000). Uwizeyimana (2014) argues that in South Africa women are under-represented in higher and middle management positions in higher education institutions. Linton, in his book, *The cultural background of personality*, argues that babies "who are not loved do not live". Literally, this means for female academics to prosper and progress in their careers, universities have to move away from the cultural and traditional values and norms that still regard females as the "'other", fit only to stay at home without progressing in their careers. Career development is a positive work achievement, the consequences of human capital, socio-psychological factors and outcomes which an individual accumulates over time, in line with their work experiences, in a particular profession (Creswell, 2013). White, Bagilhole & Riordan, (2012) assert that the under-representation of female academics in universities begins at senior lecturer positions and is even more conspicuous at the professorial level. Some of the reasons for the under and over-representation of female academics in the certain university ranks are due to work and family responsibilities, male dominance, policies in universities and lack of support systems in place

Chiloane-Tsoka (2010) found that despite having a South African Constitution that entrenches equal rights, discriminatory practices, structural inequalities, cultural factors, prejudices and traditional patriarchal society are still alive and well at institutions of higher learning in South Africa. While women dominate the teaching profession in South Africa, few of them occupy leadership positions like men (Ryan and Haslam, 2011).

According to Kola (2012) South African universities do not have adequate retention strategies in place; he suggest that if they were any staff retention strategy, the academic managers were supposed to be aware of it and consequently implement them. This would then have an impact on the development and retention of woman as researchers at South African universities. Globally, there is significance in the extent to which men and women pursue education and participate in educational institution, at the various levels. The UNESCO World Atlas on Gender

Equality in Education (2012) reflects that, in the majority (54) of 90 countries for which data is available, women only count for 25 to 45% of researchers and they represent more than 45% of the researchers in only 21 nations. Comparing South African statistics to these statistics, it is much closer to parity than the global average.

2.5. Reasons for lower numbers of women as researchers

UNESCO (2012) has identified, factors that may explain the lower number of women researchers, especially in senior positions and they include the work-life balance, gender stereotyping, performance measurements and promotion criteria, governance and the role of researchers in the society. The World Atlas also noted, that apart from being under-represented, women in research are also often paid less than equally-qualified men, are less likely to be promoted, and are consistently clustered at the lower ranking of the science system. In addition, the long-standing gendered division of academic labour that sees women more concentrated in teaching activities while men focus on research and publishing also plays a crucial role in the lower number of women researchers; research plays a role and is more valued for promotion than teaching. Another factor that is often considered a limit to women's research development is that they have less access to academic networks which are vital for a successful research career.

2.6. CHAPTER SUMMARY

Firstly, this chapter presented various theories which informed this study. The chapter went further to discuss the obstacles faced by women in higher education institutions using the available literature. Issues in line with the research objective of the study were extensively covered and these included, gender representation, challenges faced by women at higher education and attitudes of academicians towards gender equality. The next chapter explains the research methodology of the study.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

Melville & Goddard (1996) define research as a process of expanding the boundaries of one's ignorance and finding solutions to it. Research methodology is a systematic description and logical explanation of the techniques and tools employed during the conduct of the research; as the collection of reliable information about the phenomenon under the study, Welman (2005). This chapter focuses on the methodological process of this study. It starts with a discussion of standpoint theory, followed by the feminist approach, which will be followed by the study's location and population, sampling and data collection methods. Furthermore this section explores power relations in research, the researcher's positionality, and epistemic privilege. Thirdly, it outlines the ethical issues that have been taken into consideration which include informed consent, confidentiality, and privacy. Lastly, this section looked at the limitations of the study as well as the conclusion.

3.2. Feminist and methodological approach

This study employed standpoint methodological approach which is rooted in the awareness that the marginalized groups, including blacks and women in South Africa, hold a particular knowledge based on their experiences as women (Hartstock, 1998; Wood, 2012). Standpoint theory provides insight into the ways in which gender does and ought to influence our conceptions of knowledge, the knowing subject, and practices of inquiry and justification (Naples, 2009). Standpoint theory is strongly influenced by feminist ideas. Feminist research methodology identifies ways in which power relations and dominant conceptions and practices of knowledge attribution, acquisition and justification systematically disadvantage women and other subordinated groups as well as strive to reform these conceptions and practices, for equality (Lovell, 2000). The feminist standpoint takes a qualitative approach in that it focuses on the experiences of men and women in natural social settings. Wood (2005) explains that feminist standpoint focuses on the ways that social location shapes knowledge, which implies that knowledge differs from one context to another. Feminist standpoint emphasizes that knowledge is 'situated' or local, hence we talk about 'situated knowledges', as Maqubela (2013) states. She further elaborates that the feminist standpoint addresses the status of the researched in knowledge production; to the standpoint, the researched are regarded as an important part of knowledge production.

Standpoint arises when an individual recognizes the challenges, cultural values and power relations that contribute to subordination or oppression of particular groups (Wood, 2012). To this effect, standpoint theory recognises that gender differences, conditions and experiences, including gender roles and work place gender disparities, are a product of social construction rather than being natural. Standpoint theory also acknowledges that men's and women's lives differ systematically and structurally. In this research the researcher employed standpoint theory as it advocates for inclusion of the marginalized, belittled or oppressed in knowledge production. For example, the theory fights and addresses racial and male bias in knowledge production Maqubela (2013). The West, whites and men are always perceived superior irrespective of circumstances and women, blacks and/or the third world were bound by systems that ignored their reality. The standpoint theory aims to transform lived experiences of the oppressed and marginalized groups and the different social locations that they occupy and that they cultivate distinct kinds of knowledge.

Maqubela (2013) suggests that the standpoint theory establishes differences and intersectionality which accounts for the many ways women experience being a woman differently, across varying cultures and histories and across race, class, sexuality and language. According to the intersectionality theory, African women have a connection through race and gender within society and can identify with other African women from this perspective. Intersectionality approaches arose from feminist scholars such as Crenshaw cited by Maqubela (2016) who recognizes that there are important differences between women and men. Feminists argue that knowledge is achieved not through "correcting" or supplementing mainstream research studies by including women, but by paying close attention to the specificity of women's individual lived experiences (Hesse-Biber, 2014). Most importantly, the researcher chose to use the standpoint theory as it contends that a standpoint arises when an individual recognizes and challenges cultural values and power relations that tend to contribute to oppression as well as subordination of women. The feminist standpoint also brings critical understanding of the locations of women shaped through reflection and struggles (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006).

Feminist standpoint theory also emphasizes the importance of positionality, that is, the researcher's awareness of his or her own subjective experience in relation to that of her or his participants (Deutsch, 2004). The theory discusses epistemic privilege which implies that those oppressed/researched are seen to possess better knowledge of their situation and therefore possess "critical insights into the conditions of their own oppression" than those who live outside these conditions, who may not understand the emotional complexities of living under such

conditions (Narayan, 2004). Yet, an outsider's perception is also valued in that those who research from outsider positions may be able to see what is obscured from the insider's point of view, for instance, things that may be taken for granted by insiders but may be important to the study (Maqubela, 2013). Standpoint theory also refers to epistemic privileges as 'double vision' for it believes that members of subordinated groups are likely to understand both their own group's perspective and the perspective of members of the dominant group (Wood, 2012). Epistemic privilege does not belong only to individuals who produce knowledge but it can also be located in academic disciplines (Hesse-Biber, 2006).

The feminist standpoint theory, however, has been criticised for trying to put women knowledge as singular, giving the example of Hekman (2004) who has been accused of not being sure of what feminist standpoint is all about as she misconstrues it to be about being individualistic rather than it being a historically shared, group-based experiences and histories based on their shared location of power (Maqubela, 2013). It has become impossible to claim one, single or universal "women's experience" due to the existing differences among women, which several standpoint feminists acknowledge today. Hekman (2004) however, disagrees with the fact that every woman is unique and has "special knowledge" as Hallberg (1989) calls it. If women were to be analyzed each in their uniqueness, it means that feminist standpoint would end up with 'splintered' knowledge which will result in any systemic analysis being obviated.

 Like Hartsock (1983) who advocated the understanding and the evaluation of the society through the eyes of the oppressed women or marginalized people, feminist standpoint perspective enabled the researcher to examine and understand the challenges and experiences of women in climbing the academic ladder at a University in Limpopo. Feminist standpoint recommends qualitative methodological approaches which allow the researcher to understand how participants understand, interpret and experience a particular phenomenon by focusing on the participants' views and perspectives of their everyday experiences (Verwy, 2003). In this study the researcher also used the qualitative research design as this enables one to understand human behaviour by getting to know the persons involved, their values, beliefs and emotions as stated by Babbie and Mouton (2001). Additionally, the qualitative method was the most appropriate research design for this study as it allowed for the exploration of the subjective experiences and attitudes of female academic staff members on gender equality at the University of Venda.

3.3. Feminist approach/research principles

Feminist research usually takes qualitative form. The feminist approach was used because it is a social research approach that focuses on the way people interpret and make sense of their experiences as well as the world in which they are living (Holloway & Wheeler, 2002). The researcher therefore used the qualitative method because the interest was not to explain the phenomena but to understand it. As according to Sandelowski (2000) a qualitative research, describes, seeks to both authentically represent and make meaning of experiences, events or processes that people take part in while also, and importantly, describing the commonalities of those processes across participants. The qualitative method was therefore used as it produces information only on the particular cases studied. It considers that people think differently and that each individual circumstance is equally important in understanding reality. It further allowed the researcher to probe for more information, (Nelleke, 2004).

3.4. Study location

A study's location is the place or venue where the researcher conducts the study in which the events or activities occurred; it is a socially-defined territory with shifting boundaries (Neuman, 2006). This study was conducted at the University of Venda which is located in Thohoyandou, Vhembe district, Limpopo province, South Africa. The map below shows the study location or where the University of Venda is situated.

Figure 1:   Map of Vhembe District in Limpopo Province showing Thohoyandou, where the University of Venda is situated.

3.5. Study population

A study population is referred to as the entire set of objects or people that are the focus of the research and about which the researcher wants to determine some characteristics, (Maree 2007). The target population for the study was the female academic staff members at the University of Venda.

3.6. Sampling method

Maree, (2010) refers to the process used to select a portion of the population for the study as a sampling. A sample comprise of elements or subset of the population considered for actual inclusion in the study, or it can be viewed as a subset of measurements drawn from a population in which researchers are interested (Unrau, Gabor and Grinnell, 2007). The sample of the study consisted of 25 female academic staff members at Univen. The breakdown of the sample is as follows: 1 associate professor, 2 professors, 2 heads of department, 8 senior lecturers, 10 lecturers and lastly 2 junior lecturers. In this study the researcher used non-probability sampling, whereby there is no generalisation of information because it focuses on getting in-depth information (Neuman, 2011). The researcher used both purposive and convenience sampling. Purposive sampling is a form of sampling whereby subjects are handpicked from an accessible population and in the purposive; sampling is done with a purpose in mind. Usually it has one or more specific predefined groups that the researcher is seeking and one of the first things that the researcher is likely to do is verify that the respondents do in fact meet the criteria for being in the sample (De Vos *et. al.,* 2002). A convenience sample is a group of subjects selected because of their availability; it involves drawing samples that are both easily accessible and willing to participate in a study (McMillan, 1996). The researcher used both purposive sampling and convenience sampling because the researcher conducted the interviews according to the availability of the participant.

3.7. Data collection method

Data collection is a process of drawing out basic material of research from the subject of research (Blanche, 2006). Data collection techniques are strategies that are used to gather information from subjects or participants of a study.

3.8. Data collection technique and instrument

Research instrument refers to tools such as questionnaire, survey or observation schedule used to gather data as part and process of research (Gray, 2009). In collecting the data for this study, the researcher used both primary and secondary data. In terms of primary data the semi-

structured schedule interviews were used. On secondary data, the University Gender Audit 2016, which was conducted by the Human Resource Department at the University of Venda, was used. Schedule interviews utilise a set of questions structured to give guidance to an interviewer (Goode & Hatt 1965). Face-to-face interviews were conducted with participants. An interview is a social relationship designed in order to exchange information between the participant and the researcher (de Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delport, 2011). Army (2007) explains that interviews are usually used as a primary data gathering method from individuals about their own practices, beliefs, or opinions. They are, therefore, used to gather information on past or present behaviors or experiences of people (Army, 2007).

3.9. Semi-structured face-to-face interviews

Drawing on a feminist perspective, face-to-face/ semi-structured interview was used as my main data collection technique to explore and elicit the experiences faced by women regarding the criteria for promotion; their attitudes and perceptions towards women in senior positions. Face-to-face interviewing is appropriate where in-depth meaning is important and the research is primarily focused in gaining insight and understanding (Gilliam, 2000). The data was collected through semi-structured interviews whereby discussions were mostly done one- on- one terms between the interviewer and the participant; this enabled the researcher to find those things which cannot be directly observed (Patton, 2002). In semi-structured interviews the interview is managed through verbal exchange between the researcher and the participants; when the researcher wants to delve deeply into a topic and to understand thoroughly the answers provided (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003).

Feminist researchers mostly favor the interview because it makes it possible for them to collect and represent the voices and perspectives of the marginalized groups, such as women. It is through such interview conversations that one is able to unearth subjugated knowledge and elicit women's experiences, bringing them to light and subjecting them to systematic analysis, thereby, making them visible and hearable, as stated by De Vault and Gross quoted in Maqubela 2013. Interviewing is a particularly valuable research method that feminist researchers use to gain insight into the world of their respondents. According to Hessen - Bibber (2006) interviewing offers researchers access to people's ideas, thoughts, and memories in their own words rather than in the words of the researcher. The feminist interviews use reciprocity because it allows the researcher to obtain the desired results for it builds a good relationship between the researcher and the participants.

The interviews of this study were conducted at the lecturer's work place - University of Venda; the familiar environment was necessary for it enabled the participants to feel comfortable during the interview. Also, the participants were informed before the interview that participation in the interview was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time they wished to.

3.10. The researcher's positionality

Positionality refers to the researcher's awareness of her/his own subjective experiences in relation to that of her participants (Deutsch, 2004). In this research the position or perspective of the researcher was an important consideration since this is a feminist approach research. To adhere to positionality, the researcher was required to disclose her options in relation to the topic, whether she is an insider or outsider. Smith (2007) proposes that researchers should recognize their own position in the world and be constrained by the direct experiences of those being studied as well as the experiences of themselves as researchers. Fine as cited in Hesse-Biber (2014) emphasizes that one can be both an outsider and insider for one can be an outsider in one social context, while being an insider in another. Against this backdrop, the researcher's positionality was that of an outsider because of not being a lecturer and this research was concentrating on the experiences faced by female lecturers in advancing their careers. Additionally, the researcher took the outsider position to see what was obscured from the insider point of view for instance things that may be taken for granted by the insiders which may be important and valuable to the study. As acknowledged by Hill-Collins in (Maqubela, 2013) researching from the perspective of an outsider helps one to identify taken-for-granted issues that would not be visible to one who is researching from the insider point of view.

3.11. Power relations in research

Power is a creative and constituting force which functions in a circulate way across the social world (Beasley, 2005). Gendered-power relations construct and regulate women's everyday experiences in higher education and if this was not the case, then women would experience the same privilege as the men. The feminist researchers emphasize the maintenance of an equal relationship between the interviewee and the interviewer so that there is no power exploitation, and also that they should be a base for collaboration, consent and liberty (Marumo, 2015). Power relations in this research therefore, advocate for non-dominance of the researcher over the researched meaning that the researcher should maintain balanced power relations with the participants; this should bring out/ produce good results for the research. The researcher maintained power relation by making sure that she did not dominate the participants but was at

par with them and the usage of reciprocity and rapport played a vital role in reducing the unequal power relations.

3.12. Epistemic Privilege

Epistemic privilege implies that those oppressed/researched are seen to possess better knowledge of their situation and therefore possess critical insights into the conditions of their own oppression than those who live outside these conditions, who may not understand the emotional complicities of living under such conditions as noted by Narayan cited in Maqubela (2013). The researched are the subjects rather than objects of research and in this study the participants possess the critical insight based on their experiences, in which the researcher is interested. The fact that the researched are in fact the knowers or have "epistemic privilege" puts them in an important position in terms of knowledge (Maqubela, 2013).

3.13. Data analysis

Boijie (2010) states that data analysis refers to a process of systematically ordering and arranging the interview transcripts and field notes that a researcher accumulates to increase her/his own understanding about the participant as well as to enable the researcher to present what has been discovered to others. De Vos (2011) and Durrheim and Kelly (2006) agree that in qualitative study there is no specific point where data collection stops and analysis begins - it is not a linear process. Currutheers, (2007) suggests that findings are generated and systematically built as successive pieces of data. Analysis takes place throughout the data collection process as the researcher looks into relationships, impressions, commonalities and patterns while they are still on the field (Currutheers (2007). Mertens (2005) illustrates that in analyzing data, reflective activities should be included in the form; this provides means of accountability and guides the process.

 Thematic analysis was used in this research. Thematic analysis is a qualitative analytic method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It organises and describes data set in (rich) detail (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The process involves identifying and grouping or classifying collected data into appropriate class or group according to Kumar cited in Tanyanyiwa (2014). Thematic analysis was vital to this research as it identified recurring patterns, similarities and differences as well as the identification of new themes that emerged from the collected data.

3.14. Ethical considerations

Ethics are concerns, dilemmas and conflicts that arise over the proper way to conduct a research. They are defined as what is or is not legitimate to do or what moral procedures are in research (Neumann, 2011). Babbie & Mouton, (2001) explain ethics in research as the general obligation placed on researchers to conduct their craft in a socially-responsive and responsible manner. It is crucial that the researchers integrate ethics in their research in order to avoid harm to the participants as well as to ensure that the respondents take part in the research with full awareness of the purpose, risks and benefits of the research. Ethical considerations come into play when the respondents are recruited, during the intervention and in the release of the results obtained. The researcher worked strictly in accordance with ethical research standards and legal obligations of the University of Venda; additionally the study obtained ethical clearance from the University Ethics Committee. The research ethics were guided by feminist principles which ensured that there was power balance between the researcher and participants.

3.14.1. Informed consent

Informed consent simply means that subjects are made adequately aware of the kind of information that the researcher wants from them, why the information is being sought, what purpose it will be put to and how they are expected to participate in the study as well as, how participation will directly or indirectly affect them (Babbie,2014). Informed consent is an important aspect of showing respect and dignity to participants; it is also an important aspect of maintaining cordial power relations between the researcher and the researched. The researcher should obtain the necessary permission from the respondents after they are thoroughly and truthfully informed about the purpose of the interview and the investigation (Welman & Mitchell, 2005).

Before the interview the researcher explained various aspects to the respondents. As it was the researcher's responsibility to inform the respondents that the participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study at whatsoever time they wanted.

3.14.2. Confidentiality

According to Neuman (1994) confidentiality means that, although, information / data may have names attached to it, the researcher has the responsibility to hold in confidence or keeps any identity information secret from the public. Bless *et al.,* (2006) note that confidentiality means the information provided by participants is particularly sensitive and personal information should be protected and not made available to anyone other than the researcher. The researcher also

has to develop interpersonal skills such as the ability to establish rapport, whereby the parties will build a relational aspect of trust between themselves. Rapport can be built by ensuring the participants that all the information they are giving out will remain confidential.

The researcher maintained confidentiality by safe-guarding the information, by creating a password for the research file of the information shared by the participants; this situation would be maintained unless participants would agree that the information should be shared with someone else.

3.14.3. Privacy

Privacy in its basic meaning is to keep to oneself that which is normally not intended for others to observe or analyses and every individual has the right to privacy (de Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Depolt, 2011). Yegidits & Weinbach (1996) maintain that every individual has a right to privacy and it is his or her right to decide when, where, to whom, and to what extent his or her attitude, beliefs and behaviour will be revealed. It is important, therefore, for the researcher to safeguard the privacy and identity of respondents, and to act with the necessary sensitivity where the privacy of the participant is relevant. In this study the researcher safeguarded participants' privacy by making sure that their names were not written on the responses, instead the researcher used pseudonyms to represent the participants.

3.14.4. Avoidance of harm

The fundamental ethical rule for social research is that it must bring no harm to participants (Babbie, 2007); the participant can be harmed in a physical, emotional or psychological manner. The researcher has an ethical obligation to protect participants, within all possible reasonable limits, from any form of physical discomfort that may emerge from the research project (Creswell, 2003). The respondents were thoroughly informed beforehand about the potential impact of the investigation. Monette *et al.* (2005) point out that a research project may even have positive effects on the respondents and, additionally, it may take years before any beneficial effects are seen. Possible harm to subject should, however, not be rationalized by saying that the study might benefit them in some other way.

3.15. Limitations of the Study

Limitations are potential weaknesses in the study that are out of researchers' control (Simon, 2004). This research focused on selected number of women at a University based in Limpopo Province in South Africa. A study, conducted in only one of the nine provinces of South Africa, however, may tend to limit the applicability of its findings to South Africa. The researcher

encountered a number of challenges during the data collection phase. Securing the interviews was a problem as it was hard to find the participants in their offices. Some of the interviews with the senior female academics had to be done over a number of days because of their busy schedules with some of the interviews being done after working hours.

3.16. CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter looked at the qualitative research methodology that was used in the study and this approach was discussed in detail. This study employed a purposive and convenience method of sampling with a data collection technique of semi-structured interviews. While this technique might have had certain inherent problems, its numerous advantages motivated the researcher to utilise them as the most appropriate data collecting technique for this study. Data analysis and ethical consideration were also covered in this chapter. The following chapter focuses on data presentation analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents, interprets, discusses and analyses the research findings. The data was analysed systematically using the thematic analysis. The presentation of data was guided by the following research objectives:

- To investigate gender representation at Univen.
- To investigate challenges faced by female academicians in the higher education institutions and
- To examine attitudes of academicians towards Gender Equality at Univen as described in chapter 3 where the data was organized in categories.

4.2. Research Findings Analysis

The findings are divided into three sections. The first section encompasses biographical data. This will be followed by discussions on knowledge on gender equality which includes gender representation at Univen and the attitudes of academicians towards gender equality. The last section looks at promotion criteria and policies used at Univen.

4.2.1 Biographical data

The study consists of a sample of 25 female academics (*n=25*) from University of Venda. Participants, in this research, came from different age groups, ranging from 25-55+ years as outlined in figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Age
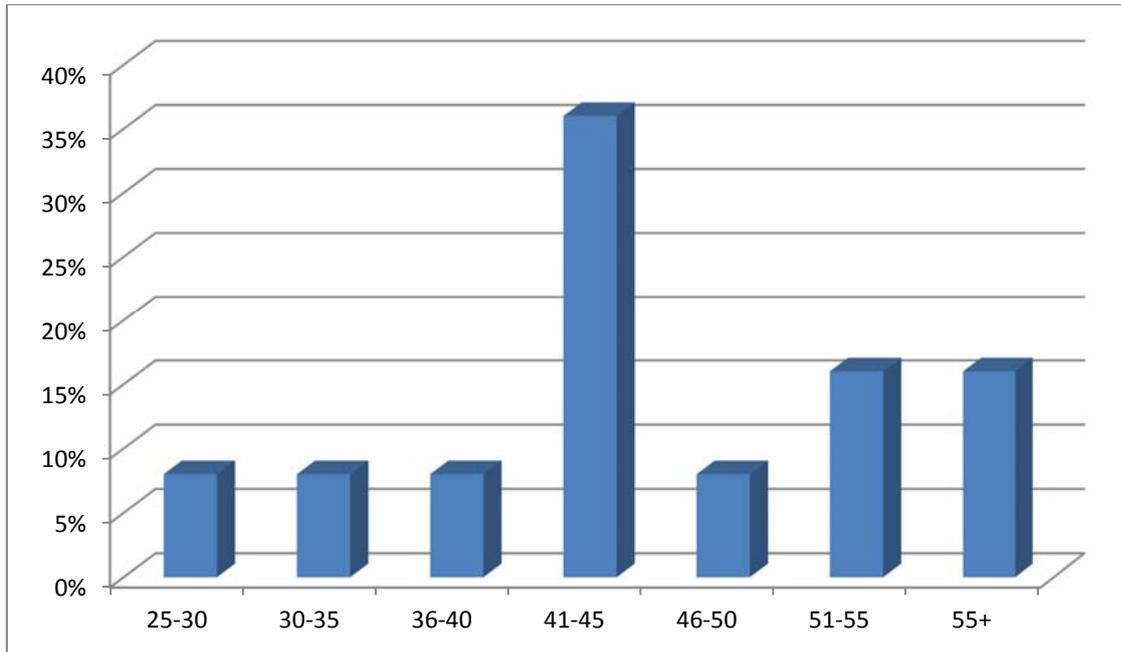
Figure1 above demonstrates the breakdown of the participants in terms of age. The data shows 36 percent of the participants are between the ages of 41-45 and form the majority in this study. This is followed by those who are between the ages of 51-55 constitutes 16 percent. However, those that are 55+ years old also form 16 percent, as can be seen in the figure above. The age groups with the least numbers are those between the ages of 25-30, 30-40, 31-40 and 46-45 who each constitute 8 percent of the study sample.

Figure 2 below represents the marital status of the study participants.

Figure 2: Marital status
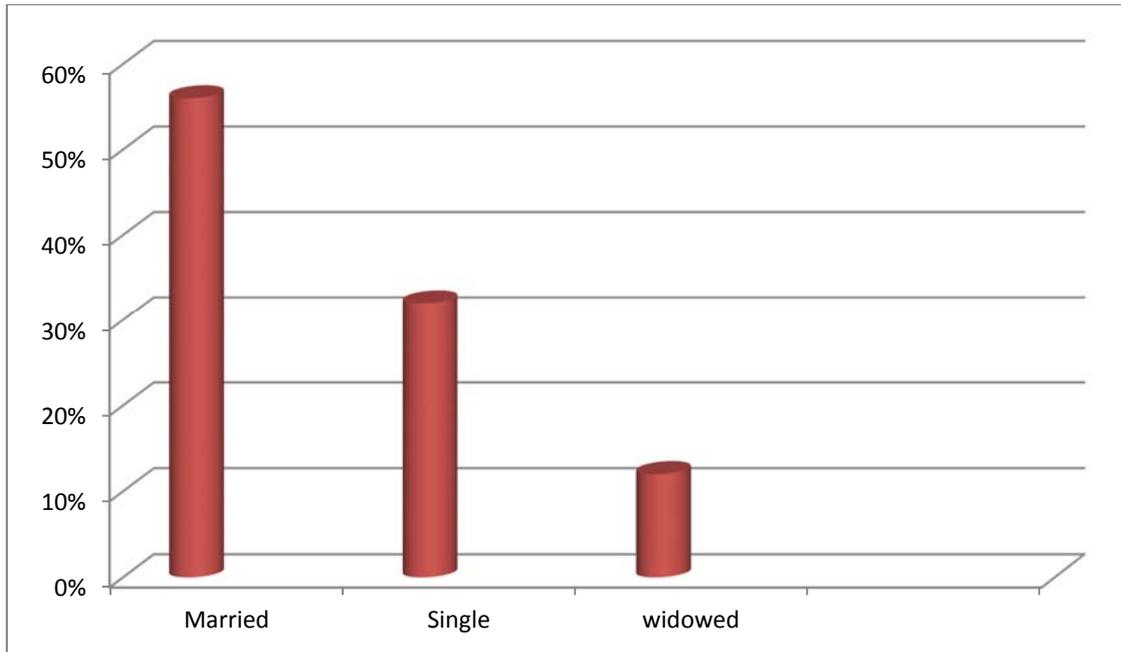
Figure 2 shows that the majority of the participants (56%) were married, 32% were single and those in the minority (12%) were widowed.

Figure 3: Participants' level of employment
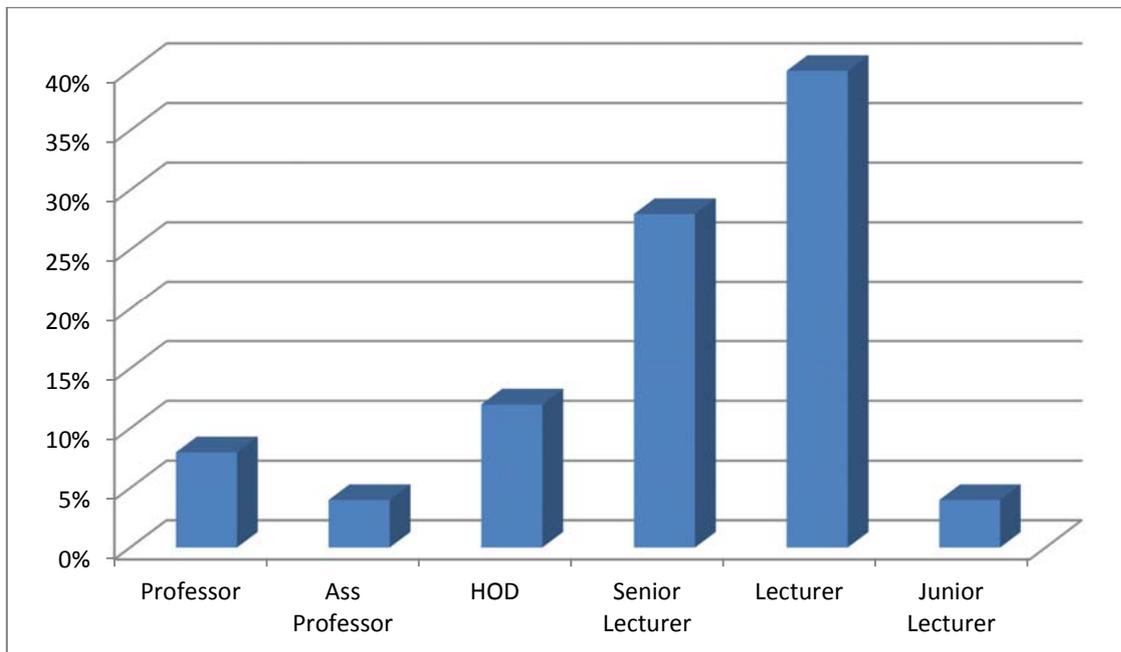
Figure 3 represents the academic levels of the participants. This figure shows that the majority 40 percent of the participants fall under the category of lecturers, followed by senior lecturers

which hold 28 percent, whereas the minority percent falls under the category of associate professor. (See figure 3 above) Professors and junior lectures both share the same percentage 8percent.

4.5. Gender representation at Univen

This section seeks to investigate gender representation of academics at the University of Venda. To do this the researcher collected and analysed the HR gender audit that was compiled by the university's Human Resources in 2016. This audit included all categories of employees within the University.   The researcher extracted only the statistics pertaining the academic categories. The audit demonstrates that women are under-represented at all levels of academic positions. The gender gap is much wider in academic leadership positions. However, the gap narrows down in lower positions, as can be seen in table2 below.

Table 2: Gender representation at academic employment levels

Occupational level	Male		Female		Total number	
Professors	27	79%	7	21%	**34**	**100%**
Associate professors	33	89%	4	11%	**37**	**100%**
Senior lecturers	68	65%	36	35%	**104**	**100%**
Lecturers	122	62%	76	38%	**98**	**100%**
Junior lecturers	21	54%	18	46%	**39**	**100%**

Source: HR gender audit, 2016

Figures show that most employment categories in academia are male dominated. The highest level of employment in academia, the professoriate, is highly male-dominated by a staggering 86% (79% full professors and 92% of associate professors). The figure for women representation improves at senior lecturer position although it is still male dominated with 65%. The figure shoots even higher at lecturer position with 76% of male lecturers. Even the lowest, junior lecturer, level of academia at this university is male dominated with 54% men, as shown in the Table above.

Given the scenario above the researcher sought to investigate experiences of women, including challenges and attitudes they are confronted with as they navigate the Higher Education Institutions.

4.4. Knowledge of gender equality

This section starts by investigating Univen female academic staff members' knowledge and understanding of participants on gender equality. To this effect participants were asked as to "how they would define gender equality". The majority of participants defined gender equality in terms of equal opportunities, while some defined it in terms of same treatment in terms of allocation of employment positions and equal payment for same positions between men and women. Others added equal gender representation. A few mentioned equality not only at work but in all spheres of life. Thus all responses contained different aspects of gender equality. This demonstrates that participants have adequate knowledge on gender equality, as can be seen in the quotes below.

Equal opportunities, equal treatment, equal jobs for men and women as well as equal representation of both men at all levels of work (Derika, 53, Senior lecturer).

Is when male/female are treated equally and given equally chance in everything/work we do, give the job not looking at gender but equal shared including salaries (Pinky, 55, lecturer) .

Gender equality is when men and women are both treated equal in terms of opportunities (Rough, 28, junior lecturer).

In addition, other participants referred gender equality to equal opportunities, including equal salaries for the same levels of employment, as can be seen below.

Women should be valued/ be equal with men in all opportunities. I believe that male and female staff must have the same salary scale on the same post levels (Clere, 45, lecturer).

It is the share of equal opportunities between men and women, including equal salaries in similar jobs (Isha, 44, lecturer).

Male and female staff must have the same salary scale on the same post levels (Vydia, 43, Associate professor).

A few participants referred to gender equality as equal relations and the non-discrimination between men and women not only in the work-place, but in all spheres of life. As can be seen in the answers that follow,

Gender equality refers to the relations between men and women and how this relations results in the allocation of resources, perceptions and welfare of women and men. No discrimination in accessing all aspects of work and promotion (Rasham,57, Professor).

Gender equality can be defined as the state of not being discriminated in all spheres of life because of gender (Vera, 52, lecturer).

It is the manner in which men and women are treated and perceived the same way (Neetu, 54, Senior lecturer).

One participant mentioned that gender equality is all about sharing responsibilities irrespective of whether a person is a male or female (see quote below).

In simple terms is when we live life that is gender blind, we allocate responsibilities in a way that is gender blind (Brown, 41, junior lecturer).

One participant pointed at the persistent gender imbalances, at the university under study, persist to date.

> *Gender equality is not yet realised within Univen because there is still a gap between leadership positions. Men are seen to acquire senior position than women (Tino, 34, lecturer).*

4.6. Perceptions on gender representation

In this section the researcher sought participants' opinions on gender representation in leadership positions at the university. To this effect participants were asked the following question*; "Do you think men and women are adequately represented in the following employment levels: Executive management, middle management, and academia?* The majority of participants indicated that women were not adequately represented at the levels indicated. They emphasized that the university management was still male-oriented and dominated (See quotes below).

> *Women are not well presented as men are dominating in this category (Vera, 52, lecturer).*

> *There are very few women as mostly the management is dominated by males (Brown, 41, junior lecturer).*

The above is in synergy with the university gender audit report, as shown in the second section of this chapter.

However the minority argued that women and men were adequately represented through gender equality as shown in the quote below

> *Women are concentrated in all positions because of growth and gender equality (Rachna, 29, Senior lecturer).*

The researcher also wanted to determine participants' views on reasons for women's underrepresentation in university management. In their responses most articulated various reasons related to the patriarchal nature of universities. Some participants felt that it is still believed that men are better leaders as compared to women, which is part of the reasons for women's concentration in lower positions of employment (as can be seen below).

> *Women are not adequately represented in top and middle management because of the patriarchal beliefs that women are not capable of leading in high positions therefore*

men are dominating in top and middle management positions as they are believed to be better leaders than women (Tady, 44, senior lecturer).

Attitudes of male decision makers (Kamla, 55+, Senior Lecturer).

Secondly, many respondents decry that women are overburdened with family and childcare and that women are faced with a challenge of balancing multiple roles, as students, workers and mothers. This response is articulated by most participants and appears in many of the responses in this section. This is in line with the literature which shows that balancing multiple roles, among others, work, family and studies in a highly masculine-oriented work environment makes it difficult for mothers to meet the highly stringent promotion criteria (Morley, 2006; Maqubela, 2013) this is discussed at length later in this chapter.

Women are held by other responsibilities (childcare and family responsibilities) besides women are marginalized and undermined. Universities they do not consider their needs and interests when decisions on promotions are made. Women find it difficult to excel in an environment that does not accommodate them. The demands are too much, criteria for promotion is too stringent, it does not take into consideration that men and women have different needs interests and responsibilities for instance men have women who cook and look after them, all men would be left with is to excel at work, they don't have to navigate both family and work (Derika, 53, senior lecturer).

Some women added that women find it difficult to balance their work, studies and motherhood and this keeps them at the lower levels of their employment, as can be seen in the quotes below.

Women are not adequately represented in top and middle management positions because due to triple load of responsibilities they find time to study limited so they end up not able to meet the requirements for higher positions (because of the lack of competency) that is why they dominate in only in the academic management (Rough, 28, junior lecturer).

Most women are still emerging researchers and they are still studying towards the PhD (which takes forever) because they are doing it part time. That is why they are not well represented in top and middle management. They have to find a balance between work, family and studies (Tamu, 33, lecturer).

Other participants argued that women were concentrated in lower positions due to the lack of the appropriate qualifications which caused them not to be motivated to apply or compete for higher positions (see quotes below).

> *Women do not compete for senior positions because they may not have the qualifications and experience required at these levels. This may be due to inadequate opportunities allowing them to climb their career levels (Rasham, 55+,Professor).*

> *Women couldn't grow enough academically to showcase themselves (Kamla, 55+, Senior Lecturer).*

In addition to the above question, the researcher also wanted to know at which levels participants thought women were concentrated, especially in academic positions and reasons for that. Participants' responses in this regard continue to demonstrate the rigidly patriarchal nature of the workplace. The majority of the participants noted that for one to climb higher on the academic ladder there is a stringent criteria set for promotion for each level, and that women face obstacles in ascending the employment ladder; because of other roles and responsibilities they have to fulfil, thus leaving them unable to meet the necessary requirements in order for them to go to the next level. In the same way women are concentrated in those positions because they are marginalised and undermined partly due the stereotype of man as being the best leaders. As illustrated in the quote below:

> *Women are held by other responsibilities (childcare and family responsibilities) besides women are marginalized and undermined. The demands are too much, criteria for promotion is too stringent, it does not take into consideration that men and women have different needs interests and responsibilities for instance men have women who cook and look after them, all they would be left with is to excel at work, they don't have to navigate both family and work (Derika, 53, senior lecturer).*

> *Women spend the best time of their lives looking after children and caring for their husbands as well as other family members (Neetu, 54, Senior Lecturer).*

Another participant illustrated that women usually took a long time to acquire qualifications and experiences needed compared to their male counterparts because of other responsibilities they have which hold them back from achieving required criteria for promotion as indicated in the quotation below.

> *Women are more concentrated in the lower academic positions because usually unlike men they take a longer time to gather experience and also they have other*

responsibilities outside work that men don't necessarily have and so you will find that they might not have the time to finish PhDs or take a longer time and thus experience to be able to qualify to be in the senior positions. Women in the junior positions are sometimes also overwhelmed by departmental administration such that they may not have a chance to grow (Phakie, 33, Lecturer).

In addition, one participant explained that gender needs and interests, among others, childcare and other family responsibilities are often overlooked or even disregarded, when it comes to decisions on promotions.

Universities do not consider their needs and interests when decisions on promotions are made. Women find it difficult to excel in an environment that does not accommodate them (Derika, 53, senior lecturer).

Women are held back by widely held stereotypical views that men are better suited for leadership positions, 'the think leader, think men attitude'. Women's lack of such confidence, as Mupambirei asserts, might pose an obstacle to their career advancement because for one to excel in climbing higher on the rank of academia, one has to possess self- confidence or leadership self-efficacy. This is in line with Mupambirei (2013) study, which found out that women reported lower leadership confidence or leadership self-efficacy than men, despite having similar education and work experience with their male colleagues.

They experience challenges due to lack of confidence as they undermine themselves, moreover feel undermined by their male counterparts (Neetu, 54, Senior Lecturer).

Women lack self -confidence, spirit of competency and as well as qualifications (Sylvia, 43, lecturer).

To acquire those positions, people are subjected to interviews and women lack confidence to express themselves in interviews (Tino, 33, lecturer) .

As already mentioned earlier in this section, HEIs are not family friendly. Employees who are mothers are alienated by such system, where competitiveness and competence are some of the major characteristics. (Maqubela, 2013). Data as well as literature shows that to be competent one has to be able to meet all demands of being an 'ideal academic', the ability to do research and writing for publications, teach and supervise research students, and be involved in community out-reach. To this effect femininity is undesired on the basis that women have other responsibilities outside the workplace, which then compete with their paid work, therefore making it difficult for them to immerse themselves in their work.   Against this backdrop women

are said to lack competency. This is said to be an attributing factor that binds women to lower positions as can be seen in responses below.

> *It might be the case that those who do the appointments think women are not capable therefore appoint men instead of woman but also the lack of qualifications, competence and enthusiasm plays a vital role as to the reasons why women are concentrated in lower positions in academia (Clere, 45, lecturer).*

This section has demonstrated that the masculine nature of the workplace and the female academics multiple roles deter them from their career progress. They decry that women are overburdened by family and child care responsibilities, and find it difficult to balance family responsibilities, studies and work. Hence they remain in lower academic positions. The Criteria for promotion idealises the idea of competency which women lack because of other competing responsibilities.

4.7. The attitudes of academics towards gender equality at Univen

This section gives attention to attitudes towards gender equality. It also focuses attention on attitudes towards women in leadership positions.

4.7.1. Perceptions on gender equality

Here the researcher looks at participants' perceptions on gender equality. It sought to solicit the views of the participants on whether men and women should be equal at the work place. In response to this, 100% of the participants strongly agreed that it was high time for women to be treated as equals with men. The participants shared the view that women are as capable as men, it is just that they are held back by the patriarchal belief system, including gender stereotypical notions of 'masculine leadership', as illustrated in the quote below

> *Because women' s lagging behind is not due to the fact that they are not intelligent or capable but because of the patriarchal stereotypes that men are the heads therefore should take the lead and women follow (Isha, 44,lecturer).*

Many of the participants share the view that women and men are equally intelligent and capable and should thus be treated equally.

> *Women are intelligent some even more than men, so when it comes to opportunities we have to be equal, as women are capable of holding higher position, physical men are believed to be stronger than women (Clere, 45, lecturer).*

Men and women are equal in all ways except physical strength. In terms of intellectual capacity there is no difference. There are men who are better than women but there are also many women who are better than men. The socially constructed gender differences some must be deconstructed (Rasham, 55+, Professor)

Some hold the view that since women and men do equal work, they should be treated the same.

We can both perform the same duties so why should we be discriminated against as women (Tamu, 34, lecturer).

We do the same job so we should be remunerated the same, be promoted equally and have equal share in the decision making process (Vera, 52, lecturer).

We are all human beings, regardless of the biological make-up we need to be treated equally, supported equally in everything because we are all capable of doing the same thing (Tady, 44, Senior lecturer).

Both men and women are employees with similar employment contracts and therefore have to be treated equally (Krish, 47, Professor and Dean).

However, if men and women are treated on the basis of 'sameness' it would mean that women's specific needs, such as childcare and other family responsibility issues, will not be addressed. This is in line with Maqubela (2013).

Other participants are of the view that gender is the basis for their discrimination. However, men and women have the same intellectual capacity.

I strongly agree on this one because it has been long that we have been oppressed and undermined because of our gender not that our minds operates differently from males. I don't see any reason why women shouldn't be equal to men (Vydia, 43, Associate professor).

It is however interesting to note that the majority of participants are of the view that both men and women should share family responsibilities.

Yes they should be equal; men and women should share even family and child care responsibilities since they are already sharing the provider role. Women do all especially those who are single parents do both (Derika, 53, Senior lecturer).

However one of the participants is sceptical about the equal sharing of family responsibilities conflating biological and socially constructed roles. However she notes that equality should only be considered on work opportunities (see quotation below).

> *It's different when you look at gender roles in the home because there is definitely some things that the man is unable to do for instance bearing and breastfeeding children BUT when it comes to the workplace, I don't think those roles are evident anymore as I believe a women is equally capable of delivering on a task as much as a man can so there I think equal opportunities should be given (Pakhie, 33, lecturer).*

Some implied that to combat gender inequality there's a need to have women representation in high positions, since male domination in high positions perpetuate oppression and abuse of women.

> *If man are given the freeway of only being themselves in power, it perpetuate oppression and emotional abuse (Brown, 41, junior lecturer).*

In summing up, the majority of participants support gender equality at workplace and within families on the basis that men and women are equally intelligent and capable to do the same work and domestic roles.

4.7.2. Attitude towards women in leadership

In this sub-section the researcher focused on attitudes of female academics towards women in leadership positions. To determine this, women were asked the following question: *"Do you think women are capable of holding leadership positions"*? This was in order to see whether women believe in themselves and other women when it comes to leadership positions. Firstly the majority of the participants shared the view that both men and women have a right to equal representation at all levels since they are all capable of holding leadership positions; if given the opportunity women could do a great job as participants cited below.

> *Everyone is entitled to empowerment, if women are able to develop themselves the same way as men why not be given the leadership position (Vera, 52, lecturer).*

> *There is no reason to be treated unequally both genders have similar capabilities (Kamla, 55+ Senior Lecturer).*

> *Women are capable of holding leadership positions just as well as men (Rasham,55+, Professor).*

Secondly, a significant number of participants elucidated that women make incredible leaders giving examples of the female deans who are in what has been considered to be a male territory, in the Schools of Law and Natural Sciences, as a good example of the capability of women in leadership. They also related to the most prominent women in South Africa as tangible proof that women excel in leadership positions.

> *For instance in the school of law and natural sciences the deans are women and are doing a great job on those positions. Also Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma is a great example of a female leader (Brown, 45, junior lecturer).*

> *We have seen women taking the higher seats for example Winnie Madikizela is a great example that women are capable (Clere, 45, lecturer).*

Linked to the above, some participants asserted that women have the capability to excel in leadership positions because they possess intellectual capacity, qualities and good management skills. This is based on the qualities and skills to multi-task, focus and patience, as can be seen below. This is in line with Maqubela (2013; 2016) who asserts that women excel despite having many other responsibilities that they are facing.

> *They are very intellect people with skills to manage things so yes they are capable of holding leadership position (Rough, 28, junior lecturer).*

> *Women are capable of holding leadership positions because they are perfectionists and are as good as men (Krish, 47, Professor and Dean).*

> *Why not we have the brains, aptitude, zeal- we have it (Jacky, 43, lecturer).*

> *Both men and women who have the same knowledge (qualifications) are perfectly capable of being leaders. Women especially are the ones who run family which requires leadership skills therefore they too can be leaders (Yash, 55+,Senior Lecturer and HOD).*

Another participant added that women had a better view and perspective as indicated below.

> *They are able because they can multi-task and have a better perspective about life (Neetu, 54, Senior lecturer).*

Interestingly, one participant attributes women's excellence in positions of leadership to their ability to single-handedly and successfully manage a home, while they also excel at work, as they diligently mentor and impart knowledge and skills to their subordinates.

> *Women have exceeding capability of leadership position compared to man. Most families are headed by females and become successful in life. Women are capable of mentoring, empathise and impart their skills to their subordinates and I believe those are qualities of a leader (Samie, 46, Lecturer).*

To further elicit participants' perceptions and attitude towards women leadership the researcher asked participants what they think in terms of having a female vice chancellor at Univen. The majority of the participants felt that it was high time for the status quo to be challenged as the position has always been a male territory as cited below.

> *Women should be given an opportunity to hold the position of Vice-Chancellor. Senior management level it's a men's world because there has never been a woman in such level at Univen, and I believe this is the time for them to be given a chance (Isha, 44, lecturer).*

> *Definitely it's a long overdue, cause it's as if women are not capable of functioning in that position (Brown, 41, junior lecturer).*

Respondents, in support institutional transformation, particularly gender transformation in HEIs. They feel that women, given a chance, could bring about positive transformation, based on their feminine qualities, that is, to foster harmony at the workplace. However, they emphasize that women should be supported in terms of gender needs, as they take on leadership positions at the workplace as seen in the quote below.

> *It's high time that the status quo should be challenged as there is absolutely no reason why women should not be a vice chancellor. It is just that they need to be accommodated with their responsibilities. But it is important that the workplace should be transformed (Derika, 53, Senior lecturer).*

> *Women do have something to contribute in institution's management therefore they should be given the chance. Besides women have skills of bringing about harmony therefore higher institutions would thereby be more peaceful under women's leadership (Yash, 55+ Senior Lecturer and HOD).*

Although participants believe that women should be employed in leadership positions; they advocate for the 'same treatment' approach for men and women with regards to qualifications, disregarding gendered responsibilities and needs, for especially women. The emphasis is on competency, as can be seen below:

It is only the qualification that matters most, if one holds the qualifications necessary for her to take that position why not? It will be very good because it has always been occupied by males (Green, 52, HOD and Professor).

For me the Vice Chancellor should be one who qualifies for the job and earns it on merit not only because of gender. If a woman qualifies the post should be given to her (Samie, 46, Lecturer).

The response from above is from both a white HOD and professor and a lecturer, it implies that men and women should be put at the equal plain to be promoted or given high positions, even though women have other vital responsibilities (child and family care) which place them at an unfavourable position with regards to career advancement.

Yes women can also perform the same job as men but when looking for a women vice chancellor it should be based on their competence. Women should not get the position because people want to meet the gender equality requirements, but because they can do the job (Tamu, 34, lecturer).

Women have to be represented in the leadership positions as long as they are competent (Tinu, 37, lecturer).

We should have a women V.C but it should not be tokenism rather the person must have appropriate qualifications and experiences (Rasham, 55+Professor).

The issue of competency again comes into play, as also shown earlier under the section on representation. Participants mentioned that leadership requires a competent individual which is in opposition to how most women operate - collaboratively and cooperatively (Maqubela *et al.* (2016).

Some women seem to think that women representation in leadership positions automatically means gender needs at the workplace are taken care of.

She will fast track the role of women in leadership and most importantly exercise gender programme for instance mainstreaming them and put systems in place (Vera, 52,lecturer).

Some pointed out women's qualities that resonate with 'good' leadership qualities.

Women can aspire and inspire a lot of people, they lead with integrity, and they have an authentic leadership skill. They are approachable and also hard workers. Therefore they can make it (Tady, 44, Senior lecturer).

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> *Women are better in-terms of record keeping and understanding the plight of students (Neetu, 54, Senior Lecturer).*

In addition the researcher also provoked the participants with regard to whether there should be a female registrar within the institution. The majority of participants believe that women would be the most suitable candidate because of their caring qualities as well as, their patience and tolerance which they believe are requisites of a good leader, particularly for this position.

> *Actually although this is a demanding post, a woman would even be more suitable because it needs a lot of patience, tolerance and a caring person. Looking after people is in us women of which I know this sounds stereotypical but it seems to be so true (Derika, 53, senior lecturer).*

Some expressed the need for transformation, as they articulated the need for cutting 'loose' and setting women free from traditional roles as can be seen in the quote below.

> *I feel that we are trapped in these traditional roles and it's time to cut them loose (Brown, 41, junior lecturer).*

The response below articulates that women are as equally capable as men to work in leadership positions.

> *Women are absent in the managerial level because they are being undermined either individually or as a group. Given the opportunity they can do a great job as a Registrar (Isha, 44, lecturer).*

> *Women have as much skills as any men therefore they can hold any position including being a registrar. Being a registrar doesn't need any male qualities (Yash, 55+ Senior Lecturer and HOD).*

However some participant pointed out that although it would be nice to have a female registrar, they should be appointed based on their merit as demonstrated by quotes below

> *Women must have necessary credentials (Rasham, 55+Professor).*

> *All the selection must be based on ability, their merit (Kamla, 55+ Senior Lecturer).*

In summing up female academics believe that women have what it takes to be in leadership, which is contrary to the 'think leader, think male' stereotype, which was widely held in the early 2000. They believe their feminine qualities such as patience, tolerance and ability to focus coupled with their intelligence qualify them to be excellent leaders. They believe their

appointment could bring about positive transformation in leadership of the Higher Education Institutions.

4.7.3. Lack of support for women in leadership

This subsection seeks to determine whether women receive full support in their leadership positions either from other women or men. Firstly the researcher sought to find out if women would support women who are in higher leadership positions. To determine this, the question asked was, "*Do women support women who are in leadership positions?* Subsequent to that respondents were asked to elaborate on their answers. The majority of the respondents gave the 'yes' answer to this question. However upon their elaborations they also showed that women do not actually support other women, as was demonstrated by the quotes that follow.

The quote below demonstrates that female academics themselves in the university under study do actually assist in perpetuating patriarchy in a sense that they subscribe to the patriarchal culture and in turn practice what is widely known as 'the pull her down syndrome (PHD)' .

> *Here at this University the PHD (pull her down) syndrome is practiced and the belief that men will always elevate women (Vera, 52, lecturer).*

> *The problem is that as female academics we do things on our own, it is very rare to find female academics making suggestions that we meet and see how we can help each other, I have seen we tend to derive joy when one of us is having problems, most of us female academics have PhDs' (Pull Her Down Syndrome), I think we are our own constrictions, because as long as we do not cry out and or reach out for help then we cannot develop our careers (Green, 52, HOD).*

Secondly, some responses as seen in the following quotes implied that women can be their own worst enemies, actually worse than men when it comes to support for women who are in leadership positions.

> *I am afraid that many women do not support other women at all. If anything they can be even worse than men and am not really sure why that is the case but what I can see happening is that all are doing things silently in groups and trying to out -do others. Hence they don't share information (Derika, 53, senior lecturer).*

> *Women are basically nasty to each other (Tino, 35, lecturer).*

Other respondents added jealousy, lack of trust and greed among women to the reasons why women fail to support each other.

Women fail to support each other because they are envious, jealousy and greedy (Rachna, 29, Senior lecturer).

Women don't trust each other, jealousy also is a factor (Aliya, 44, Senior Lecturer)

Another participant added that women choose to support men instead, in the process women help in giving males power to marginalize women who are in leadership positions:

Women have problem of jealousy, bullying oppressing and helping/ supporting men to oppress women (Brown, 41, junior lecturer).

In the case of women choosing to support men instead of other women, two of the participants explained that it was due to the fact that women lacked the spirit of unity among themselves and because of the way they were socialised that men are the heads of the families, as described below.

I think we lack the spirit of oneness, we have the fear of opening up to each other, we are not also supported by the leadership here, I think they see us unreliable, there is still a huge chunk and mentality of patriarchy which is in existence and is exercised in this university (Pinky,43,lecturer).

Because of socialisation many women are used to having men bosses and often struggle to support female leaders (Rasham, 55+Professor).

In the same vein, the study shows that women lack confidence in other women to the extent that they cannot vote for their fellow female academics who are capable of holding leadership positions.

Women have this perceived thought/ideology that women are not capable to lead because of that they don't support each other, as women, we have a wrong mentality that women are weaker sex (Clere, 45, lecturer).

This can also be related to the findings in the earlier section that women lack confidence in themselves therefore it is difficult for them to trust that other women have the capability to be in leadership positions. This affirms literature that women lack unity and support towards each other (Maseko 2013; Uwizeyimana, 2014).

However, a few participants (12 percent) felt that women do indeed support women leaders. One of them expressed the support she receives from her female subordinates. As demonstrated in the quotes below.

Yes women do support women in leadership position; I am in a leadership position myself and I receive a lot of support from female colleagues (Krish, 47, Professor and HOD).

I think the relationship they (women) have with each other counts (Gaury, 45 Senior Lecturer).

A minority of participants gave a both no and yes answer, stating that women do not fall under one category. There are those who have no confidence in female leaders. On the other hand, there are those who do as explained below:

Unfortunately, women have that curse of not wanting to see another woman get ahead and that is why I have also put no. However mature women who have had experience and who are well versed with issues of management will know well to support other women because it's a chance that is rare and once that person takes that responsibility they will definitely need the support of other women otherwise she will be dominated by men (Aliya ,44, Senior Lecturer).

I think at times some women have a challenge of being led by other women. They might be difficult and find fault with everything she does but it is certainly not all women who are unsupportive (Samie, 46, Lecturer).

A similar question was posed but this time *soliciting participants' views about men support for women who occupy leadership position at the work place?* The majority of the participants revealed that basically both men and women do not support women who are or who aspire to go for higher positions because they are generally not ready to be led by women. Participants feel that men tend to make women feel inferior by marginalizing them, using 'hegemonic masculinities' to their advantage, presenting themselves as superiors and better than women (see quotes below). :

I will tell you about my own experience. Men arrogate themselves powers that, to make sure that women are marginalized, at the same time as a way of portraying themselves as better than women, or as saviours of women, they only assist women who worship them. At one point one male professor was saying to us "I have been telling these women to come to me and I will help them publish " (Derika, 53, senior lecturer).

Men don't support women because they think they are superior (Samie,46, Lecturer).

This resonates with Uwizeyimana (2014) who found that women in leadership lacked support and acceptance from both men and women.

The quotes below reflect on the male hegemony and women lack capacity to take leadership positions.

> *Men have the mentality that women cannot make it in higher position due to their lack of capacity to lead (Clere, 45, lecturer).*

> *Not really man love to dominate. They prefer to hold higher positions while women are under their power (Silvia, 45, lecturer).*

On the other hand, some participants believe that men feel threatened by women who are in leadership positions.

> *Men don't support women because they feel undermined and threatened (Kamla, 55+, Senior Lecturer).*

> *Men often are not comfortable with women leaders –again socialisation is playing a vital role (Ammol, 55+ Senior Lecturer).*

On the contrary, the minority (12%) of participants indicated that men do support women in leadership as explained below:

> *I have seen men support and assist women occupying leadership position, I receive that support from my school staff (Vydia, 43, associate professor.)*

> *I have witnessed it in my department, where the HOD is a female and men support her (Brown, 41, junior lecturer).*

> *Men do support women in leadership position; my response is only based from my observation and from my school and department (Gaury, 45 Senior Lecturer).*

One participant added that men do support women. However, they end up controlling the ones that they are supporting as explained below:

> *They do support them, but if that the particular woman is not careful they end up being controlled (Neetu, 54, Senior Lecturer).*

On the other hand, some participants (8 percent) responded with both yes and no responses demonstrating that there are men who support women leadership as well as those who feel intimidated by women who are in high position as illustrated below

My answer here again is on 2 levels, some men respect women especially if they are experienced for the job and hold an excellent cv but others may feel intimidated by a woman in a more senior position than themselves so might not be fully supported (Pakhie, 33, lecturer).

Not all men are unsupportive. There are those who support but certainly there are those who are hostile to the leadership of women and feel threatened and their manhood challenged (Yash, 55+,Senior Lecturer and HOD).

This section demonstrates the lack of support on women who are leadership positions. The data has shown that women themselves lack confidence on women in leadership positions and lack unity among themselves. In this way women assist in perpetuating patriarchal ideals. Most of the participants share also the view that men feel threatened by women in leadership positions as this challenges their masculinities. Both responses from men and women above concur with Mathevula (2014) who asserts that in the South African education system, men and women are generally not prepared to work under a woman because women lose their femininity the moment they become managers.

4.9. Challenges faced by female academics in career advancement

4.9.1. Institutional Challenges

This section sought to determine Institutional challenges experienced by participants. The data demonstrates that participants struggle with juggling excessive and multi-dimensional work load. This includes teaching, supervision, studying, some included doing research and publications, as will be seen in comments below.

4.9.2. Teaching load

In this category the researcher sought to find out the work load the female lecturers had and in order to achieve this, the researcher asked the participants about the number of modules they taught and the number of students they were teaching as well as the time they took preparing for the classes. The majority of respondents answered that they had an excessive teaching load based on the number of modules and students. The teaching load seems to be also based on the level of employment. Those who are at junior levels of employment seem to be teaching at undergraduate levels of students, who constitute a large number of students. These seem to take long hours of preparation leaving them with no time for family,\ research, publication, and to further their studies. The majority of participants indicated that they teach between 2 and 11 modules and a maximum of over a thousand students per annum as they indicated below:

I teach four modules and the total number of students for the 4 is 1038 (Clere, 45, lecturer, 12 years, MA).

I teach four modules and I have 278 students (Neetu, 54, Senior lecturer, PhD)

I teach three modules and I have 450 students (Green, 52, HOD, PhD).

I teach three modules and have 310 students (Aliya, 44, Senior Lecturer, PhD).

I have 390 students and teach 2 modules (Isha, 44, lecturer, 6 years of experience, MA).

I have 187 students and teach 11 modules per annum (Rough, 28, junior lecturer, Hons).

I teach six modules per year and have 800 students (Phakhie, 33, Lecturer, MA).

I teach many modules (6) and have 120 students (Tamu, 33, lecturer, 6 years of experience, MA, currently registered PhD).

I teach four modules and have a total of 345 students (Rasham, 55+Professor, and PhD).

I have 278 students and I teach four modules (Neetu, 54, Senior Lecturer, PhD).

One participant demonstrated that male academics allocated themselves final year or post-graduate modules which have fewer students. The heavy teaching load, impede women from doing research and publication. This is partly the reason they find it difficult to meet requirements for promotion, they shared their experiences as follows:

Yes there is an issue of modules, males rarely teach 1st years, I have been here for 6years now and I have never taught other modules accept for 1st and second years. Male seniors prefer to have post graduate students (Isha, 44, lecturer).

Participants also spend a lot of time preparing for the class as is shown below:

I take a lot of time, it's like when you are a lecturer you don't have time for personal life because even when I am supposed to be at home the students will be calling pressurizing about their researches, I remember this other time when a student called me when I was body viewing my sister asking me her research (Isha, 44, lecturer).

I spend a lot of time that I cannot count the number of hours I spend preparing for class (Brown, 41, junior lecturer, Hons).

I never really calculate the time I use in preparation, but I put in a lot of hours (Aliya, 44, Senior Lecturer, PhD).

Other participants were able to estimate the time they used for preparing their work as illustrated in the quotes below

I use almost 20 hours per week in preparation for my classes (Rasham, 55+Professor, PhD).

I spend 2 hours preparing for one class, so per week I use 12hours altogether (Neetu, 54, Senior Lecturer).

Another participant elaborated that she spends much of her time at night preparing for her classes as indicated on the quote below:

Most of my nights at home were characterised with preparing for three lectures and practical's (Pakhie, 33, lecturer).

Few of the participants, who teach at post-graduate level, indicated that they had students who were less than 100.

I have 13 students, since I teach at post-graduate level, and since this is at higher level, it takes a lot of hours to prepare for (Derika, 53, Senior lecturer, PhD).

I teach 75 students (Tino, 35, lecturer, MA).

This section demonstrates that most participants have a huge teaching workload and spend long hours to prepare for lectures. This has implications on their ability to do research and publications for career development.

4.9.3. Student Research Supervision

In addition to the teaching, most academics supervise students' research work, which adds a lot to their workload. The participant indicated that besides having teaching load, they had lot of students to supervise as well, as can be seen below

I supervise 9 Masters Students; co-supervise 10 MA plus 4 PhD students (Derika, 53, Senior lecturer, PhD).

I have 9 honours students, that I supervise (Isha, 41, Lecturer, MA).

I supervise 12 honours students (Rogue, 28, junior lecturer, Hons).

The data above demonstrates a huge workload with regards to postgraduate student supervision, in addition to the teaching load.

4.9.4. Lack of Publications

This subsection looks at challenges with regards to publications. The data demonstrates that the vast majority (60 percent) of participants have not been able to publish in accredited or non-credited journals. These participants expressed concern on lack of female role models and their inability to form networks that would assist them in their publication profile. They indicated that to be promoted in academia one's publications, conference attendance, presentations and research were the key. To this effect they needed role models and mentors, who would introduce them into the publishing world or the community of practice. One participant indicates that it is difficult to make a breakthrough into the publishing world without mentorship and networks, as can be seen in the quotes below.

> *One needs the right networks, one needs mentoring to be introduced to publishing and research. It is difficult to make that breakthrough alone but for men it's easy. New male academics get this kind of mentoring automatically, but for a woman one has to practically beg to be let in (Derika, 53, Senior lecturer).*

> *The greatest problem in publishing is that we do not have people who mentor us, and it is very difficult to start publishing without assistance (Green, 52, HOD).*

> *I have a lot of work to do which leaves me with no time to write my articles and the other challenge is that I don't have mentorship to guide me on how to go about it (Silvia, 42, lecturer).*

> *Somehow there is lack of mentorship from the people in senior positions possibly because of fear of their jobs taken therefore each man has to find their own way around in order to succeed and climb the academic ladder (Pakhie, 33, Lecturer).*

Other, participants demonstrated that due to lack of mentorship and experience in article writing they had challenges of having their articles being rejected several times as they could not meet the publishers' standards as shown in quotes below:

> *I have submitted but most of my papers seem to be rejected every time and I have given up. At least for now until I have more time of my hands (Pakhie, 33, Lecturer).*

> *An article may be rejected several times and sometimes with destructive feedback (Ammol, 55+ Senior Lecturer).*

> *It is not easy to meet the standards set by pubishers (Gaury 45, Senior Lecturer).*

This is similar to Maseko (2013) who acknowledges that mentoring is the chief means by which female academics can become prepared to advance in their careers in academics.

Other participants emphasised most on the challenge of women in finding research and publishing networks. The participant below, reveals how male counterparts had sometimes exclude women in their networks as per the quotations below:

> *Women have not had a lot of encouragement from the men because already, they do not even want them there one way or the other. Women, in their bid to do it once or twice, have not had it easy and because other things are demanding their attention and time, we tend to resign. In academia it is either you publish or you perish. Your research work and publications carry a lot of weight that can push you to the top. The men form cliques when it comes to conducting research and publications, shunning their female counterparts. Sometimes, in the whole department there is just one woman, so it becomes difficult for the person to do any publication or research with a colleague (Vera, 52, lecturer).*

The importance of networking cannot be overemphasized. Women with professional information can help others network by introducing them to colleagues and peers within the same discipline, opening up opportunities for advancement. Adusah-Karikari and Chitsamatanga (2008; 2014) affirm that network connections are crucial ingredients for professional career success and assessed decisions about promotions.

In addition to the above, participants elaborated that publishing was too demanding mentally and one needs to be proficient in academic writing as well as in terms of knowledge about how journals work in order to be successful publishing articles as quoted below.

> *Too demanding mentally, there is a lot one needs to know about journals when you can publish (Derika, 53, senior lecturer).*

Secondly, the participants identified the heavy work load, coupled with family responsibility, as contributing factors which stand in the way of women with regards to publishing articles since it consumes lot of their time (see quotes below).

> *I am always swamped to the extent that I don't have free time to do my own articles (Isha, 44, lecturer).*

I have a lot of work to do which leaves me with no time to write my articles; the other challenge is that I don't have mentorship to guide me on how to go about it (Silvia, 42, lecturer).

Heavy teaching loads, for 10 years I was the only member with higher qualifications hence had supervision of students (Rasham, 55+Professor, PhD).

I find it difficult to juggle the heavy work load with research and publication. We have few staff members with heavy workloads and there's a problem of navigating work and family my children need me but have no time for them. They are basically on their own (Derika, 53, senior lecturer).

Publication, publication, publication…… I am sitting on a lot of data which needs to be published but because of teaching and much work load it's hard to do that (Tino, 37, lecturer).

Another participant indicated that she although she has been working in the university for a long time; she has not been allocated senior postgraduate students until she obtained the PhD qualification which now allows her to supervise MA students, from whose work she can publish.

I have spent most of my academic life supervising research at undergraduate level. The understanding was that we were only introducing research to students therefore using small sample sizes due to time constraints. Because we were doing quantitative studies the small sample size would render work done not publishable. I was also not allowed to supervise (as a main supervisor) postgraduate students before obtaining PhD so I just received Masters Students to supervise recently after obtaining PhD (Neetu, 54, Senior Lecturer, PhD).

In addition, one participant stated that besides having a demanding work load, they also lacked support from senior colleagues who have experience in publishing.

The supporters from colleagues who are published are not there. The demands of the job leave little time for working on papers. The challenges of family responsibility and health related issues also make it difficult (Yash, 55+, Senior Lecturer and HOD).

Lastly, participants highlighted the issue of delay in the procedure of getting a response from the publishers as another dilemma.

I am still waiting for the results to the one that I have sent which I have submitted three months ago (Brown, 41, junior lecturer).

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Moreover, men are seen to be 'gate-keepers' as they are in control of who gets to publish in many journals, as can be seen below.

> *I have just sent three articles for publication but then men are already dominated and they are gatekeepers there. If you are a woman and you do not know any of them then you are already out. One needs network but even networks are male dominated (Derika, 53, senior lecturer).*

> *The problem is gatekeeping which is done by men (Kamla,55+, Senior Lecturer).*

This is similar to Kola's (2012) findings which indicated that women have particular difficulties securing access to the higher education system that allocates resources, research support, and opportunities to publish.

When it came to challenges faced by participants with regard to publication even those that had published still illustrated that they faced various challenges. However, only a few mentioned that they had no challenges when it comes to publishing. They stated that they are assertive and work hard for publications and they receive enough support and that they have already been promoted.

> *After having realised that in order to make it in the academic world one must work harder therefore I told my-self that I must publish and be assertive and confident in what I do (Neetu, 54, Senior Lecturer).*

> *It has always been easier since I am well trained in writing (Rachna, 29, Senior lecturer).*

4.9.5 Lack of research involvement

This subsection sought to find out whether the participants faced challenges in research involvement, as it plays a vital role in their academic progression. The data demonstrates that the majority of participants do not engage in research, for the reasons that have been already mentioned above. Participants struggle to cope with the demands of the academic world. Participants still mentioned that their challenges have to do with, among others, lack of networks and mentoring with regards to research, as also mentioned under the section on publications and promotions. In this study only a minority 28 percent of participants have engaged in research. Only 12 percent as an NRF/DST rated project leader, one as a research assistant, data collector and the last as an emerging researcher. This indicates that almost all participants have not participated in big scale research projects as NRF-rated researchers, as can be seen in the quotes below:

I am the main researcher, and an NRF/DST rated researcher. I direct the study (Vera, 52, lecturer).

Was assisting someone with the research who was funded by NRF (Clere, 45, lecturer).

Assisting in the collection of data, capturing data as well as interpreting the results (Tino, 35, lecturer).

Collecting data, analysis of data and report writing (Aliya, 44, Senior Lecturer, PhD).

Another participant indicated that she was involved in both NRF/ DST as a project leader and researcher

I led a project which was funded by NRF and also was a researcher in another project-conducted research on small enterprises in Limpopo (Rasham, 55+Professor, PhD).

One of the participants indicated that some of the funding institutions are age restrictive and thus exclude older people from participating in research funded projects.

I do not meet the requirements especially those relating to age wise (Yash, 55+,Senior Lecturer and HOD).

Many of the participants mentioned that the only research involvements they have participated in are their studies to enhance their qualifications. Most of the participants revealed that they were currently registered students doing their researches as part-timers:

I am doing my master's (MSc in Bioknetics) degree part time (Rough 28, junior lecturer).

I am currently registered for PhD as a part time student (Clere, 45, lecturer).

The majority of the participants have indicated that they had challenges with regards to research involvement because they have been overloaded with work, as also mentioned in earlier in this section. Most of the participants find themselves struggling with the juggling of competing demands (as mentioned earlier in this section), study and family responsibilities which did not give her room to do her PhD study (see quotes below).

Women are swamped with too much work load of teaching and supervision. As well as the responsibility of taking care of the family, this derived them from concentrating much on research work and publications. This is one of the reasons why men are dominating in senior positions and have done many researches compared to women (Isha, 44, lecturer).

The major problem that we have is the workload. We teach more than one module per semester to both under and post-graduates students. We supervise students' research work; we are required to participate in departmental meetings and various activities. We also have to attend workshops and trainings aimed at self-development so that we function efficiency as academics. We also have few staff members with heavy workloads and there's a problem of navigating work and family my children need me but have no time for them. They are basically on their own (Derika, 53, senior lecturer).

Although there are ample funds available and plus ample support by the university, women still face various problems in engaging in research because of the teaching load and other responsibilities. But also the preparedness and capability to engage in bigger scale research (Green, 52, HOD).

Some seem to have given up on career and self-development due to the heavy workload (see quote below).

I know that for me to be promoted to senior lecturer I should achieve a PhD qualification but for now I can't even think of registering for it because I have too much work load which makes it impossible for me to work on my PhD study (Isha, 44, lecturer).

Others mentioned that it was difficult for them to do research as time did not allow them due to heavy work load (see quote below).

The biggest challenge is research, it needs time because you can have so many ideas and even abstracts that are accepted, but getting the time to do a full paper before deadline is another story, the workload is too much (Pink, 55, lecturer).

I have the challenge of time issues as I have no time to allocate to research (Samie,46, Lecturer).

In addition other participants stated that most women are not capacitated to do large-scale research and that they needed to be equipped with proper research training.

There are challenges of lack of strong research background and training in the institution which is one of the major problem that hinder women from doing research (Vera, 52, lecturer).

The researcher also posed a follow up question, on whether the participants faced any challenges regarding access to research funding. One of the participants reflected that they got the national research fund (NRF) when they conducted their own research as indicated below:

I am the one who directed the study and in charge of the funds that I got. Once the study is approved by the RPC, it automatically get funded, by the University (pinky, 55, lecturer).

However the majority of participants have indicated difficulties in accessing research funding. This has contributed towards women non-involvement in research.

The NRF/DST funding is not given to everyone, the process to get it is not easy, and sometimes one can apply but not get the response (Tino, 37, Lecturer).

In addition, another participant stated that in research she faced challenges relating to funds and time to conduct and be more involved in doing research.

If I can get, more funds to conduct my research. If only the number of modules could be reduced so that I can have more time for my studies (Tamu, 34, lecturer).

This section has demonstrated that women need capacity training, mentorship and networks in research. Secondly, it has shown that women have too many responsibilities to juggle within and outside work and this leaves them with no time to focus on research and publications, which are key to their career advancement. The responses above are in line with literature which states that due to lack of work-life balance, performance measurements and promotion criteria there is a lower number of women researchers (see also UNESCO, 2012).

4.9.6. Lack of Institutional Support

4.9.6.1. Workshops

In this subsection, the researcher sought to investigate the kind of support provided by the university to support academic staff members in terms of self- and career development and whether it has added any value to staff members and their development. In order to achieve this, the researcher asked the participants the following question, '*Have you attended any of the staff development article writing workshops?*' In response to this question the majority 60percent of the participants stated that they have attended article publication workshops. Many of them mentioned that they have attended more than once.

Figure 4: Participant's attendance of workshop
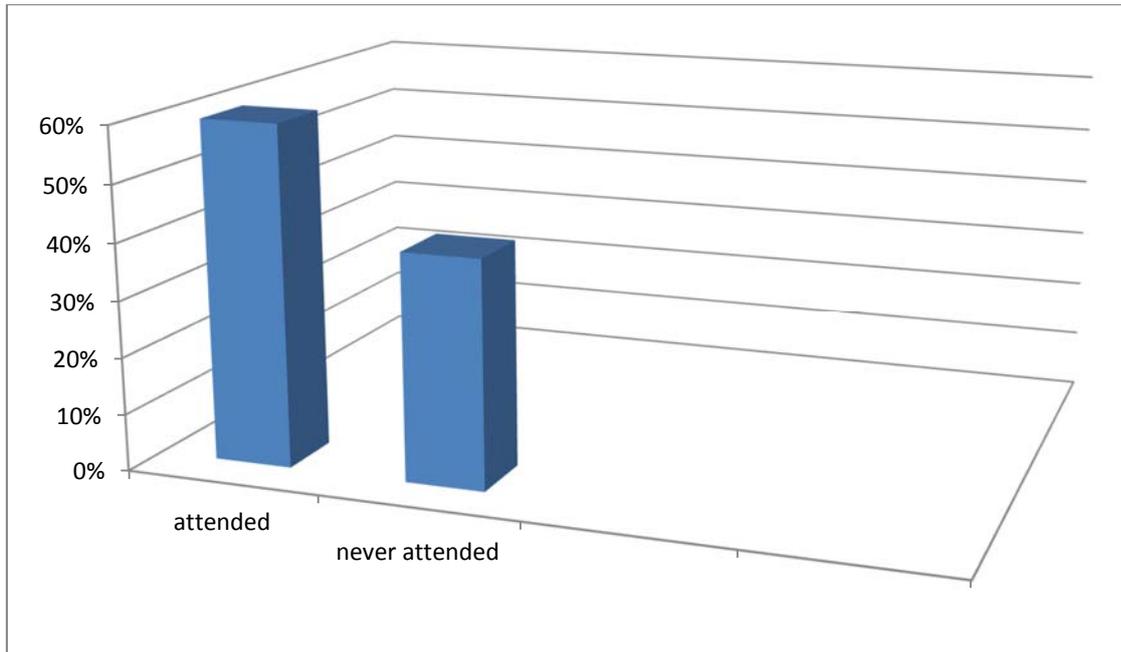
The Figure 4 above demonstrates that the majority (60%) of the participants have managed to attend developmental staff workshops. Below is a figure which shows the number of workshops attended.

Figure 5: Demonstrates number of workshops attended
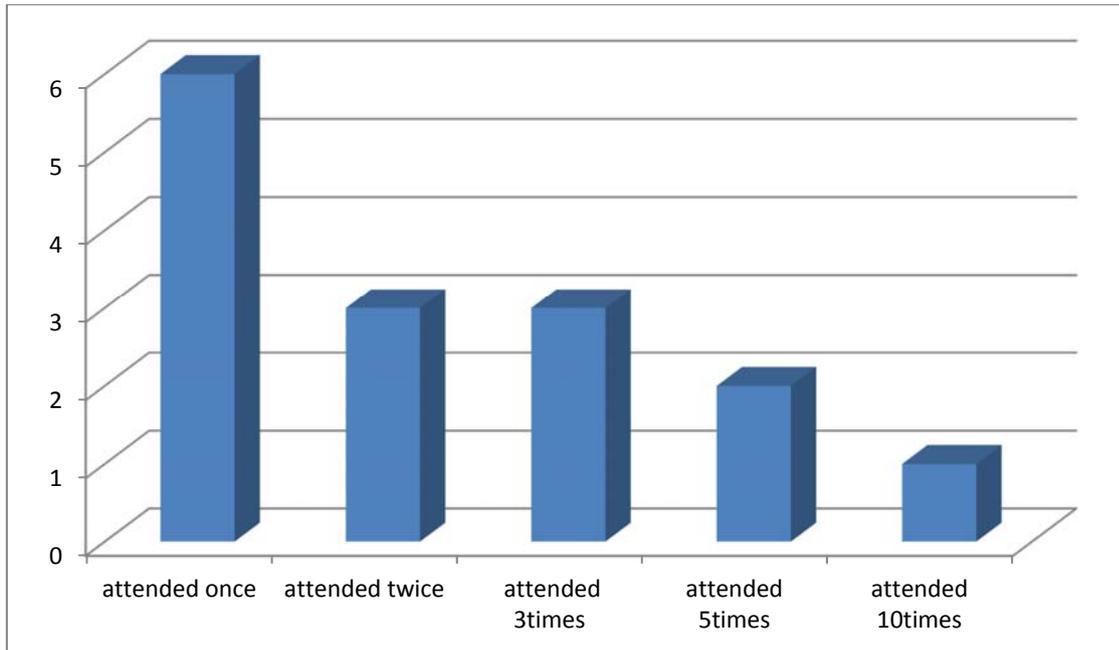
Few of the participants indicated that they had attended many of the staff developmental workshops which were organised and supported by the institution. They mentioned them as follows:

> *I have attended several workshops provided within this University which are: Assessor and moderator training, post graduate supervision and promotion workshop, women and leadership workshops, teaching and learning workshop as well as proposal writing workshop (Derika,53, Senior lecturer).*

Another participant revealed that she had attended only two staff developmental workshops (see quote below).

> *So far I have only attended two workshops, article writing and teaching and learning workshop (Tamu, 34, lecturer).*

One participant who had attended more workshops than all participants was a professor

> I have attended many writing workshops in the past as part of research teams, about 10 workshops (Rasham, 55+Professor, PhD).

4.9. 7. Benefits of workshops

In addition, having determined that most of the participants have attended staff developmental workshops, the researcher posed the question on whether the workshops assisted them in any way. The majority agreed that the workshops have been very useful as it enlightened them on the procedure for writing articles and the process of publishing them. Other participants claimed that due to those workshops they were now able to write articles. See the quotes below

> *With procedures to be followed: to be aware of publication theft and always answer the calls for publications by specific conferences (Vera, 52, lecturer).*

> *They have helped to easy on my master's articles writing because it was easy for me to finish quickly with understanding since I am doing my studies at a distance (Brown, 41, junior lecturer).*

> *Mostly helpful to make me focus and check for important aspects to be included in the articles (Kamla,55+, Senior Lecturer).*

> *It helped me to get published (Gaury 45, Senior Lecturer).*

Moreover one of the participants elaborated that the workshops was so beneficiary as she learned how to identify and address written comments

> *I learnt about how to identify a publishing journal and how to address comments among other things (Krish, 47, Professor and HOD).*

Other benefits stated are access to university research funding.

> *It helped me with Financial RPC (Vydia, 43, associate professor).*

> *It is beneficiary because I am being developed and the workshops are sponsored by the University.*

Another participant added that the workshops increased access to information, as can be seen the quote below:

> *Since we do not have mentors, they help in giving us the information we need on writing articles (Green, 52, HOD).*

For others these workshops play a motivational role towards publications

> *Workshops have helped me a lot, it encouraged me not to give up after a paper was rejected (Pakhie, 33, Lecturer).*

Another participant elaborated that the workshops were beneficial because after attending courses they were issued certificates as well as receiving knowledge on how to teach students. (see quote below)

> *Its beneficiary because at the end we get certificates as well as learn how to do things, for instance in assessor development course we learnt how to assess students (Clere, 45, lecturer).*

However, a few of those who attended the workshops stated that the workshops did not benefit them much.

> *Not really (Jacky, 43, lecturer).*

In addition, two of the participants suggested that for the workshops to be beneficiary there should be coupled with mentorship and made more practical (see quotes below).

> *Some of the workshops would be beneficiary if there was practical mentorship, for there is need to put these workshops into practical, for instance when they ask us to apply on a large scale research its difficult because its need practical as they is need to do follow ups of which in the workshops they just provide orientation (Derika, 53, Senior lecturer).*

4.9.8. The promotion criteria

The first section highlights that women are concentrated at the lower levels of academic ranks. The intention of this section is to determine why this is the case. To this effect this study looks at the promotion criteria to determine if they accommodate women's needs. This section therefore intends to examine and outline the promotion criteria used at Univen. The first question in this section therefore sought to find out if people were aware of the promotion criteria. The majority 80 percent agreed that they were familiar with the promotion criteria. As can be seen in Table 3 below

Figure 6: Awareness of promotion criteria
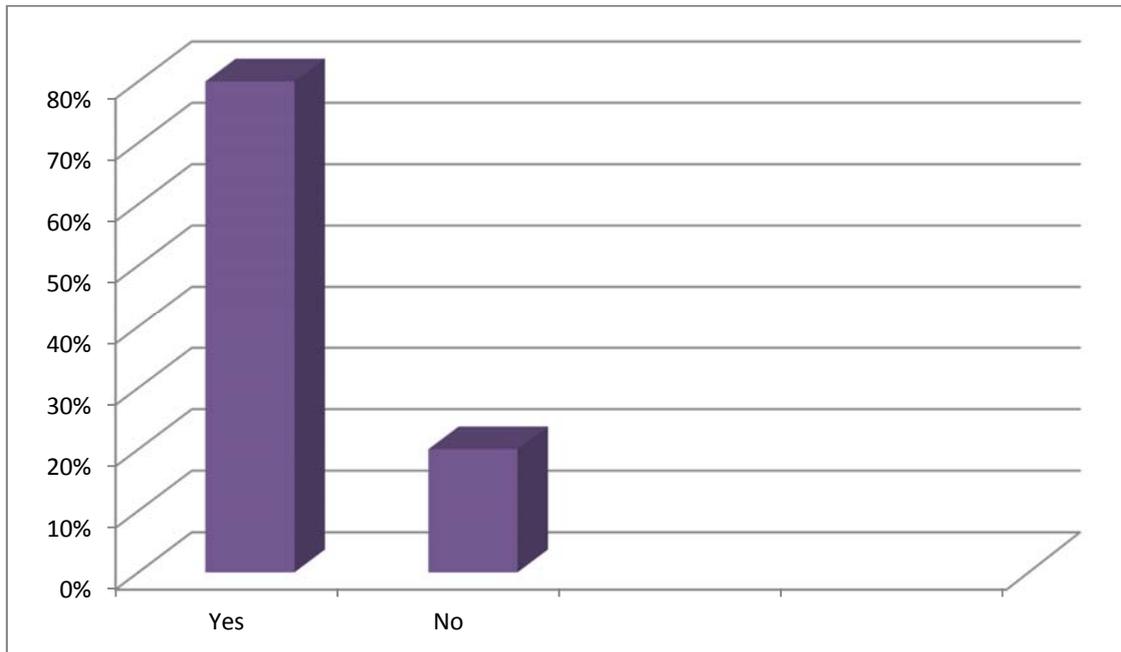
However, most of the participants did not know the exact requirements and therefore could not clearly articulate it. The data shows that only two were able to spell out the criteria as it is in the policy, as can be seen in what follows in the quote below:

> There are different criterions for different levels to move from junior to lecturer one needs a master's degree, to move from lecturer to senior lecturer you need doctoral qualifications and for associate professor one should have graduated Master or Doctoral students at least 4 and 10 articles published in accredited journals. For one to qualify as a professor one needs, around 15 publications, supervision of Master or Doctoral students at least 4 (Derika, 53, Senior lecturer).

> Yes they list it according per post description, for instance for one to become a lecturer should have masters qualification, senior lecturer should have a doctorate, supervision of 5 postgraduate students at Honours level and at list published 5 articles, for professoriate one has to publish 15 articles that is why usually when one needs to be a professor takes a sabbatical leave in order to concentrate on publication (Vydia, 43, Associate professor).

Yes, qualifications, publication of articles and supervising masters and PhD students (Green, 52, HOD).

Two of the participants included community engagement as part and parcel for the promotion criteria as shown below

I am aware of the academic promotion path. Promotion for academics is based on the qualifications, number of papers published and community engagement (Samie, 46, Lecturer).

Publication, supervision and community engagement (Rasham, 55+Professor, PhD).

Others mentioned something totally irrelevant as can be seen in the rest of quotes below

It automatically goes with the qualifications one has (Brown, 41, junior lecturer).

Required qualifications, capabilities and being able to handle given responsibilities (Clere, 45, lecturer).

Others also mentioned policies:

Promotion policy and affirmative action policy (Tino, 35, lecturer).

Affirmative action policy and promotion policy (Vera, 52, lecturer).

Lastly, one participant did not outline the promotion criteria but instead stated that the policy might be used unfairly

Not outlining the process/criteria. However the policy is there and I am not sure if it's being exercised fairly since I see a lot of women lectures at lower levels (Vera, 52, lecturer).

The above demonstrates that participants are not clearly conversant with what the policy articulates for promotion.

The second question sought to determine whether the promotion criteria used at Univen was similar for both men and women. In order to achieve this, the following question was asked*: "Is the criteria used for promotion the same for men and women?* in response to the above question the majority of the participants indicated that the criteria for promotion was the same for both men and women, gender neutral, as they commented below.

Yes because they look at the qualifications (Silvia, 42, lecturer).

Yes I think they use the same criteria (Green, 52, HOD).

Yes it is, no discrimination in whatsoever because they consider qualifications (Brown, 41, junior lecturer).

Yes it's all about qualifications and competency (Tady, 44, Senior lecturer).

However, although some participants agreed that the promotion criteria used was the same for both men and women, they argued that women should be given special treatment ('the women perspective')   (See also Booth and Bennet 2002; Costano 2010), since they have other responsibilities which men do not necessarily have

I believe it is the same but on the other hand women should be first preference as they have a lot of responsibilities on their plate (Green, 52, HOD).

Yes, these guys do not care about the fact that women have so many burdens outside work, men can come and work at night and we can't. As we have to look after, they find everything ready at home. And it is early for them to travel anywhere and for most works (Derika, 53, senior lecturer).

Thirdly, the participants were asked what it takes for them to meet the promotion criteria from the level they were to the next level. The participants acknowledged that for them to be promoted they need to meet the promotion criteria required. The majority of the participants were lecturers and they stated that doctoral qualifications were needed for them to be promoted to senior lecturer position, see quotes below:

I should have a doctorate (Silvia, 42, lecturer).

To go to the next level, I have to obtain a PhD degree (Tamu, 34, lecturer).

In order to be promoted to senior lecturer position, I should first obtain a doctorate (pinky, 55, lecturer).

They need a doctorate in order to become a senior lecturer (Clere, 45, lecturer).

Participants who were senior lecturers indicated that for them to be promoted to associate professor they should have at least graduated masters' and PhD students and published a certain number of articles.

For associate professor one should have graduated at least 4 MA and PhD students and published 10 articles (Derika, 53, Senior lecturer).

I have to publish 10 articles and also supervise at least 4 master's and PhD students

(Green, 52, HOD).

I need 10 publications and 4, successful supervision of Masters and Doctoral theses (Gaury, 45, Senior Lecturer).

A certain number of publications, leadership responsibilities, community engagement activities and a certain length of teaching experience (Yash, 55+,Senior Lecturer and HOD).

One professor indicated that in order for her to be promoted from professor to senior professor she has to have published an undisclosed number of articles.

As a professor to move to senior professor I would need many more publications (Rasham, 55+Professor, PhD).

Junior lecturers responded that to move from the junior level to lecturer they have to possess a master's degree:

Master's degree "MSc in Bioknetics" (Rough, 28, junior lecturer).

I just have to get a Master's degree that all (Brown, 41, junior lecturer).

Participants were further asked whether they were able to meet the promotion criteria required for them to rise to another level in their academic post. The majority of the participants reflected that so far they were not able to meet the criteria, and that it will take long because the promotion criteria were too stringent and does not consider their workload and responsibilities (see quotations below).

For now no, I have to qualify with a PhD (Isha, 44, lecturer).

Not yet, I will have to complete my doctorate and supervise 5 postgraduate students at honours level (Tamu, 34, lecturer).

I still have to achieve the required qualifications (Green, 52, HOD).

For now, I can say no (Silvia, 42, lecturer).

Some of the participants seemed despondent with regard to promotion. Important to note is the fact that most have overstated the promotion criteria and see promotion as long way off, as though it is almost impossible to achieve. See the responses below and compare with them with Table number 3 on the promotion criteria

No I'm so far from meeting the requirements. They are so difficult because there is no support for us. It took more than 10years to understand the publishing work and I'm still

struggling to make it through. Not sure if I can get promoted any time soon (Derika, 53, Senior lecturer).

I have to finish my doctorate first and publish at list five articles (Silvia, 42, lecturer).

As long as things remain the same, it is not likely (Tino, 35, lecturer).

I need to obtain a PhD degree; I still need to publish journal articles (Tamu, 34, lecturer).

Am not sure of when I will be able to finish the required / expected articles (Green, 52, HOD).

There are a number of articles that am yet to publish (Tady, 44, Senior lecturer).

Not at the moment (Rasham, 55+Professor, PhD).

Only one participant is ready for promotion. She indicated that she already had what is required for promotion (see quote below)

All that is remaining is to be promoted (Vydia, 43, associate professor).

To sum up, the criteria used for promotion is the same for men and women despite the fact that women have childcare responsibilities. Thus women continue to face challenges meeting the promotion criteria required. The data also shows that the promotion criteria as impossible to reach. This leaves women concentrated at the bottom of academic employment level.

4.9.9. Last promotion

This subsection seeks to find out whether the participants have had any kind of promotion in the past years at the institution under study, as well as the level from which they were promoted. In response to this question, the majority (56%) of the participants revealed that they have not been promoted in the past 3 to 5 years, and that they were still in the same level they were when they joined the University, as indicated in the quotes below.

I have never been promoted, because I joined the university in 2010 as a lecturer and am still in that position (Tamu, 34, lecturer).

I came here in 2011 in a position of a lecturer so I have not yet been promoted (Isha, 44, lecturer).

I haven't been promoted as I came here in the position of a lecturer and that's where I am still (pinky, 55, lecturer).

I came here many years ago as a full professor (Rasham, 55+Professor, PhD).

Other participants elaborated that they have not been promoted because they were moving at a slow pace towards meeting the promotion criteria as indicated below. And this is because of the competing demands and responsibilities by the participants.

Never, I have always been a junior because I am taking so long to finish my master's degree, and when am done will move to lecturer (Brown, 41, junior lecturer).

On the other hand, a minority indicated that they have been promoted from one position to another after acquiring the qualifications needed to meet the promotion. The promotion was the progression process and it took a long period of time for these participants to get promoted, for instance, the senior lecturers have to wait for more than 10years as indicated in the table below.

Table 4: Demonstrate the years which the participants were promoted

Pseudonyms	Year employed	Year promoted	From which level	To which level
Silvia	2006	2010	Junior	Lecturer
Vydia	2004	2012	Junior	Lecturer
Tino	2008	2012	Junior	Lecturer
Derika	2002	2014	Lecturer	Senior lecturer
Tady	2001	2014	Lecturer	Senior lecturer
Samie	2005	2015	Lecturer	Senior lecturer
Pakhie	2009	2015	Junior	Lecturer
Krish	2006	2017	Associate	Professor
Yash	2007	2015	Lecturer	Senior lecturer

However, some participant did not state the exact year they were promoted but instead just mention when it was.

The year I got my master's degree (Clere, 45, lecturer).

4.9.10. Challenges regarding meeting the promotion area

Looking at the evidence above which explicitly reflects difficulties that the majority experience in meeting the criteria for promotion, I asked the participants the following question; *"Do you have challenges in meeting the promotion criteria*? The majority of the participants illustrated that they were faced by many challenges which were blocking them from meeting the expected promotion criteria. First participants seem to struggle balancing demanding work responsibilities, studies and family, as these created roadblocks to their self-development. The first challenge stated is publication, as a major challenge (see quotes below)

> *I have, first I'm trying to figure out the world of publishing, it has taken me so long to understand it. It requires such hard work it seems impossible to meet the criteria. I find it difficult to juggle the heavy work load with research and publication. We have few staff members with heavy workloads and there's a problem of navigating work and family my children need me but have no time for them. They are basically on their own (Derika, 53, Senior lecturer).*

> *Yes it will ever take me long to meet the promotion criteria because of the responsibilities that I have, I am still to obtain a doctorate (PhD) and with my work I struggle to find time that I can concentrate on my research (Isha, 44, lecturer).*

The second challenge is acquisition of the qualification required for promotion, as also seen earlier in this section and in the above responses below.

> *Responsibilities as a women I haven't achieved my doctorate nor published any article yet (Silvia, 42, lecturer).*

> *Lack of time to finish my study and as well as lack of mentors (Tamu, 34, lecturer).*

Third, some participants demonstrated lack of time management skills, as can be seen in responses above and below. However, even if they had such skills the demands are too many to manage.

> *I still have to do my doctorate first and time does not favour me at all, have lot of work as well as a family to take care and at the end of the day I find myself too exhausted to even think of doing my own work, so I keep postponing to do my doctorate (pinky, 55, lecturer).*

Fourthly, participants indicated the difficulty for them to meet the promotion criteria as they lacked mentors to introduce, explain and advise in areas especially of research and publication,

as can be seen in the quotations below. As Maqubela *et al.* (2016) state, academics spend much of their time trying to familiarize themselves with how academia works and to figure out what is expected of them as academics.

> *We lack mentors who introduces us to publication, as young researchers we need mentorship (Tamu, 34, lecturer).*

> *One needs mentoring to be introduced to publishing and research. It is difficult to make that breakthrough alone but for men it's easy (Derika, 53, Senior lecturer).*

> *My challenge is that I don't have a mentor to guide and to advise me on how to go about it (Silvia, 42, lecturer).*

Participants also indicated the lack of assessment and evaluation of academics as another challenge they were facing (see quotation below). The participant seems to think assessment would perhaps push academics to work harder towards their promotion goals.

> *I was never assessed even though there are systems in place, quarterly assessment and performance evaluation ((Vera, 52, lecturer).*

The only participant in the study who was due for promotion in this study, elaborated on the challenges which were prolonging the promotion, as indicated in the quote below.

> *Maybe the challenge that is there for me is that I have been in the associate professor for too long (Vydia, 43, associate professor).*

Others, expressed frustrations on the financial challenges they encounter which lead to the lack of progress in their own studies.

> *Yes, more funds and requirements to conduct my research. If the number of modules can be reduced that way I can have more time for my studies (Tamu, 34, lecturer).*

Contrary to the above comment, another participant stated that they were funds disposed to those who wanted to further their lives as described below:

> *No we are even given the money to study which we call capability grant (Brown, 41, junior lecturer).*

The above demonstrate that women still face multiple challenges with regard to meeting the promotion criteria. As long as they continue having demanding work responsibilities, lacking mentors and financial support which are their roadblock to their mobility, they will continue being hindered in their progress.

4. 10. Institutional policies on work life balance and gender equality

This section enquired from the participants whether they were familiar with   policies that addressed gender inequality within the campus of Univen. The majority of the participants indicated that they were familiar with the policies that was used (see from the quotes below)

> *Sexual harassment and gender policy (Tamu, 34, lecturer).*

> *Equality policy and sexually harassment policy (Derika, 53, senior lecturer).*

> *The university has policies on employment equity, sexual harassment etc (Rasham, 55+, Professor, PhD).*

However some participants indicated that they were not aware whether there were any policies that the University was using to address gender inequalities within the campus. (See quotes below)

> *Not that I am aware of (Brown, 41, junior lecturer)*

> *I am not aware of any policies (pinky, 55, lecturer)*

The responses above shows that there are participants who were not familiar with the policies that were to protect their rights, they would be treated unfairly and without knowledge of the existing policies. For instance the policy on sexual harassment which its purpose is to provide framework of handling cases of sexual harassment committed within the University to prevent them from re-occurring if one does not know about it then the incidence will continue occurring without knowing where to report.

4.10.1. Affirmative action

Last, but not least, the participants were asked whether affirmative action was being used / employed to achieve gender equality at Univen. The majority of the participants indicated that the affirmative action was used in order to redress the imbalances at the work place. See quotes below;

> *Yes preference is given to black women first, followed by white women then black men lastly white men (Silvia, 42, lecturer).*

> *Preference is given to black women first as they have never been any female chancellor before (Tamu, 33, Lecturer).*

Contrary to the above, one participant did not agree that affirmative action was being used

No. it is not the criteria for promotion is the same for both men and woman (Derika, 53, Senior lecturer).

4.11. Lack of Institutional support in advancing gender equality

In this section the researcher sought the knowledge of the participants on support systems put in place to advance gender equality as well as to address related problems at the University under study. The majority of the participants indicated that they were not aware if the University had any support system which addresses, particularly women's issues, and even if it is there, it is surely not active as they were lot of gender challenges affecting staff, especially women. Below, a participant implies that the assistance received only addresses the problem at a superficial level, thus it does not deal with the root of a problem that is why the support system remains ineffective.

> *The university is not doing much to assist women but instead one has to see how to find out how things are done. The thing is people are not open so one has to struggle to find out about how things are done. The university supports workshops on article writing but we need more than just that, women need proper mentoring (Derika, 53, Senior lecturer).*

Another participant added that that there is lack of implementation of gender equity policy in place; this is seen in the continuing patriarchal nature of the University under study.

> *They have gender equity though they are still lacking behind about gender issues, this mean that they do not believe in practicing gender issues (Tady, 44, Senior lecturer).*

However they are the minority who felt that the university was providing support such as financially to support the academics and sabbatical leave in their career advancement see quotes below

> *It provides financial support, mentorship and workshops (Krish, 47, Professor and HOD).*

> *Staff development where training needs as determined by staff are addressed, research is also supported through RPC and HR also provides leave days (Samie 46, Lecturer).*

> *Research funding, assess to study and sabbatical leave, conference and workshop attendance, training workshops (Rasham, 55+Professor, PhD).*

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4.11.1. Other Gender Related issues

In addition, the researcher also wanted to know whether the participants had other gender-related issues which they considered important which had not been addressed by the University. With regard to this question the participants shared lot of different views and challenges related to gender which they considered important. Firstly, the majority pointed out that gender imbalances, discrimination and marginalization against women still prevails as the balance of power within institutions is evidently in favour of men. They elaborated that gender discrimination is an obstacle to female academics advancement to professoriate and senior management positions as they are treated unfavourably because of their sex (as can be seen below).

> *Gender imbalances and inequalities, discrimination or marginalization –we need to respect one another and practice equality for all (Tady, 44, Senior lecturer).*

> *The pillar of gender inequality needs to be addressed. This is not just a matter of numbers. The deconstruction of patriarchy must be systematically accessed (Rasham, 55+Professor, PhD).*

> *Discrimination, there is a need to respect women same as men (Tamu, 34, lecturer).*

Other participants indicated that women empowerment was needed in order to improve women's conditions and positions

> *Gender inequalities, they should be real empowerment for women not just stating it in paper work but be practical (Silvia, 42, lecturer).*

> *I think women should be given an opportunity to get ahead, more time to develop their careers, mentorship and be given priority when it comes to opportunities to build more experience and to give them a boost (Pakhie, 33, Lecturer).*

Secondly, participants touched on the issue of gender- based violence as other major issue that the University turns a blind eye to. They considered the university environment as toxic because of the exploitation and violence that women and female students go through in the hands of their male counterparts (see the response below).

> *We have so much gender based violence (GBV) going on campus its tough, people don't know where and how to report sexual harassment of all sorts. This environment is toxic, men exploit women and students and even support staff: there is a lot to that needs to be done in this place. The things men at all level are exploiting women and it is*

difficult to change/ transform if the leadership itself is involved (Derika, 53, Senior lecturer).

The majority of participants agreed that there was a lot that still needed to be done in order to transform the university.

Lastly, one of the participant suggested that men should be roped in when advocating for gender related issues so as to prevent hostility from men. To convince other men to join the gender struggle:

For instance the former president championed the whole country to participate in gender issues, he even established the 16 days of activism for no violence against men and women which is still active up to date(Vera, 52, lecturer).

Also the other gender issues that I see as a challenge, is that of having a male dean, they don't understand our challenges as women. I suggest a female dean for a change in our school (Isha, 44, lecturer).

4.12. Conclusion

This chapter has presented the themes that emerged from interviews with 25 female academics. The findings of this study addressed the three main research questions posed in this study, and discussed thematically, supported with quotations from participants. The findings revealed that the institution is rigidly patriarchal in nature. Women continue to experience multifaceted challenges in the workplace. Factors found to be contributing to women's under-representation in the workplace include conflict between work role and family responsibilities, lack of role models and mentors, lack of confidence in women themselves as they have gender stereotypical mind-set. Women remain under-represented because of lack of institutional support, lack of research and publications. Most of the participants reflected that they were not skilled when it came to applying research funds. Women find it difficult to be involved or participate in research and publication because of the teaching work load they have although research and publication is their main key to promotion. Furthermore the findings revealed that the promotion idealised the idea of competency which women lacked. In a patriarchal society like South Africa, many institutions tend to favour men as good leader compared to women. In addition, institutional support and structures impact negatively on women's experiences in higher education. These external factors significantly influence women's experiences in higher education.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction

The previous chapter has focused on the presentation, analysis and discussion of data. In this chapter, the focus will be on how the findings have answered the research objectives, limitations and future research. This will be followed by the implications of the findings, recommendation, contributions to literature, future research and conclusions.

 The study sought to answer the following research questions:

- How is the gender representation at Venda?
- What are the challenges faced by female academics at higher education institutions?
- What are the attitudes of academicians towards Gender Equality at Univen?

5.2.1 How is the gender representation at Venda?

This question sought to investigate gender representation in all levels of management and academia at UNIVEN. Findings have shown that women are under-represented in almost all management and academic levels. Glaring gender disparities were revealed especially as ranks ascend. The data and statistics show that women are not represented at the executive management. Women are slightly represented in middle management. This may be attributed to patriarchal belief system including gender stereotypical notions of 'masculine leadership (Booysen and Nkomo 2010; Morley, 2013).

We see similar gender disparities in academia. Data has shown glaring disparities at the professoriate level, slightly more women representation at senior lecturer and lecturer levels (35% and 38% respectively) and at junior lecturer level, women are almost at par with men, at 46%. The study reveals that unlike men, women face challenges as they navigate work, family, their studies and other roles. This is part of the reasons why women find it difficult to climb the academic ladder particularly in academia. The findings have demonstrated that women are located in lower positions due to the fact that they lack institutional support, their gender needs and interests are disregarded when it comes to decisions made on promotion. All these contribute to their lack of participating in research and publications although these are important requirements for promotion, as will be seen in the next subsection.

To this effect, as the literature suggests much still needs to be done to close the gender gaps in higher education institutions in South Africa (Morley, 2013). The findings demonstrate that gender equality in almost all higher education institutions globally remains difficult to achieve.

However the findings provided interesting accounts regarding this issue of gender equality, since women have lack of confidence in themselves, so in order for change to take place, it is perceived that they should be change at the radical level, cultural, structural and as well as individual level which is the transformation of men's mind set, by getting rid of the negative stereotypes and preconceived notions that both themselves and the society has about their ability to lead.

5.2.2. What are the challenges faced by female academics at higher education institutions?

This question sought to address the challenges faced by women in ascending higher positions in academia. Findings have shown that women faced multiple barriers in ascending the academic ladder hence they are under-represented at management and higher academic levels of employment. Their career development and progress continue to be fraught with challenges which do not seem to be receding.

Firstly, results of the study have revealed that women experience challenges of balancing work and family responsibilities. Participants felt that the root of their problems lies in the prevalence of strong patriarchal cultural background that still prevails in society such that child care and family issues are still to a large extent mostly their responsibilities. The problem of the inability to achieve work-family balance is perpetuated by lack of family-friendly and masculine-oriented work environment. This is evidenced in the lack of institutional support for working mothers (as seen in chapter 4). HEIs seem to have adopted the bare minimum in terms of work-family reconciliation, to accommodate employed mothers, and yet academic work is highly demanding. The findings have clearly shown that as an academic, one is required to teach, supervise research students, travel to conferences and work-related workshops, research, engage in community outreach and publish. Women are hardly receiving institutional support and without this, women find it difficult to reconcile work and family.

Secondly, the study had clearly established that there is lack of mentorship programmes and female role models in HEIs. Several studies have shown that mentorship is most effective in addressing the problem of gender under-representation (see posholi 2013; Maseko 2013; Chitsamatanga, 2014). Mentorship is a vital instrument that is effective in empowering women on what is actually needed for them to climb the academic ladder; in other words, it can help to fast track them on meeting the promotion criteria. Furthermore, mentorship assists in updating women on what is taking place/happening within the institution and other institutions for instance conferences and workshops. Female role models are also lacking although they play an

important role in the professional development of all individuals. However, the study findings have demonstrated that none of the female academics reported receiving such support. This is exacerbated by shortage of female role models to provide such mentorship for female academics. The lack of female mentors may lead to a feeling of isolation by emerging academics as is also highlighted in Hobbler, *et al.* 2011 study. The findings also indicated that the mentoring programme was not offered within the institution but however they were training programmes (workshops) which the university offered but the participants felt that they were not adequate and they could not be compared to mentorship. There is, therefore, a need for a mentorship programme to be introduced, whereby academics could travel even to other institutions in order to be mentored.

Thirdly, the findings from the study also highlighted the challenge of research and publication which is a part of the promotion criteria and hall mark of true academics; female academics still struggle to participate in this area. As men have always been in this field this means women have to play by the rules of men who know all the rules of the game. This is also highlighted in Chitsamatanga's 2014 study which reflected that men do more research than women. The data showed that the majority of participants did not publish either in accredited or non-credited journals. Concerns were raised about lack of female role models and their inability to form networks that would assist them in their publication profile.

It also emerged that high teaching loads was prevalent in this University. The results have shown that women are given high teaching load and are allocated many research students to supervise every year while men were allocating themselves with lower classes where they know that they will have more time on doing research and publications. The participants noted the preparations for teaching which took long hours leaving them with no time for family, research, publication, and to further their studies.

Furthermore the findings also demonstrated that the promotion criteria used was very stringent and women faced so many challenges trying to meet those criteria. Generally when it comes to meeting the promotion criteria women still have got a long way as most of them were still doing their PhDs and in that area they were also facing challenges of too much workload which constricted them from concentrating on their researches. The literature used in this study demonstrates that too much responsibilities and workload are part of the challenges that hold women back.

5.2.3. What are the attitudes of academicians towards gender equality at Univen?

This question sought to determine female academics perceptions and attitudes towards women in leadership positions. The findings have revealed changing beliefs and attitudes, from in the sense that participants share the opinion that men and women have equal intellectual capacity and therefore should be treated as equals at the workplace. This is contrary to what Booysen and Nkomo's (2010) found, 'think manager think male' attitude. However, participants allude to the fact that women are still discriminated, undermined and oppressed based on their sex. As already alluded to above, this has been attributed to the prevalence of patriarchal values and beliefs that are embedded in the societies and their institutions. The findings have demonstrated that women preferred to have a female vice chancellor and a female registrar for a change as the position had always been male dominated. As Mahasha (2016) asserts, traditional beliefs, values and attitudes regarding the role of women in society are still prevalent and act as deterrents to the promotion of females.

The findings have shown change of attitude by women towards women holding high positions. First they themselves showed interest in applying for top management positions, but assert that there are many barriers that hold women back, including acquisition of the necessary qualifications, cultural stereotypes, masculine work-culture, and family responsibilities among others. Secondly, as the data reveals, it was difficult for both men and women to support a woman who holds a leadership position.

5.3. Conclusion

Women come to work in universities with an expectation of equal treatment and assessment of their work on its merit, and an assumption that they would advance in the same way that men rise to the top of their disciplines. This has not always been the case, as this study has revealed. Women representation in this institution remains very low, as the findings demonstrated that the representation of women in academia continued to remain low and that the promotion criteria remain stringent and difficult for women to meet. In this research, it can be concluded that despite considerable efforts to combat gender inequity in higher education, the challenge still exists. Higher education in this institution needs more women representation in executive management, senior management, middle management and as well as in academic positions. What is needed is a more caring, collegial, family, and community-friendly culture within the university to support women. The patriarchal nature of South African society has gradually crept into the universities. This culture, consciously or unconsciously, shapes women's experiences in higher education. Morley (2005) concludes that we need to forge

alliances that expose and confront how gendered power is relayed via exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism and violence in academic life and in wider civil society. Therefore it is of importance that universities are guided by the three major principles of gender mainstreaming process, which are:

-That gender issue is systemic and requires being treated as a cross-cutting issue in both teaching and research processes;

-That the treatment of gender issue or concern that is not based on evidential data is often treated casually or with sentiments. Therefore, it is important kick-start the engendering process with a situation analysis which provides basis for a baseline argument and evidence. This allows future monitoring for change and evaluation;

-That gender mainstreaming deals with the root of the problem as it is designed to challenge the rigid and deep-rooted cultural beliefs that perpetuate gender inequality, which to date appear to be a major challenge faced by South African society and its institutions.

5.4. RECOMMENDATIONS

In cognizance of the findings presented in chapter four of this study, recommendations are made at three levels: University, women and policy makers.

5.4.1. Recommendations for the Institution

The University needs to incorporate democratic values and principles into its system. The university needs to enforce a supportive climate and environment that is responsive to women's issues rather than continue as an environment that impedes women's personal, academic, and professional development.

a. *Development of a Gender Equality/Equity Policy*

The University needs to develop and institute clear gender-equity/equality policy which would provide a framework on mainstreaming gender in all areas of the functioning of the University. This would include the overhaul and reorientation of all policies, programmes and projects to incorporate gender starting from the planning stage of these (Maqubela, 2013). Among others, policies such as staff development, mentoring, research and publication and HR policies such as recruitment and selection policies should be among those in which gender should be incorporated, as also elaborated below. A commitment must be made by the University, in consultation with the Gender Unit, for example, to organize a gender-sensitization program and for a, sex-role socialization program to educate men who are set in their ways as traditional

thinkers and are proponents of patriarchy. There needs to be a collaboration of both women and especially men in achieving this effort.

b. Mentoring and Training

To make a systematic impact, mentoring and training should be formalized as an integral part of an institutional policy for equal opportunities. Well-developed mentoring programme is the most popular and seemingly effective strategy to address much of women's experiences of under-representation particularly within the academic fraternity (Maqubela, *et al*. 2016). Therefore the institution should adopt mentorship programmes\ policies to assist those who are lagging behind.   Staff development training workshops should be coupled with mentorship. These programmes should be formalised and on-going. As Maqubela *et al*. (2016:9) state "mentoring and training programmes may serve several purposes simultaneously, in that while getting assistance on developing one's career, problem-solving and networking, this would also increase self-esteem, confidence and efficacy of women especially junior academics". These mentoring and training programs should be consistent and continuous throughout the year.

c. Family-friendly Environment.

 The responsibility lies on the institution to create environment and policies that are supportive of women's attempts to combine career and family. Institutions should address the needs of those with childcare and other family responsibilities, especially female staff members who are mothers (Austin, 2007; Maqubela, 2013). To this effect, adequate family-friendly policies should be adopted to assist female academics who are mothers to reconcile work, studies and family. HEIs and the workplace in general should introduce child-care facilities such as, a nursery, a crèche and breastfeeding rooms (or enhance where there are already such facilities).

d. Networking

 Academic networks could be useful in increasing productivity amongst the female academics. Through mentors the institution should consider facilitating academic networks to assist female academics in forging research and publication partnerships. The academic networks will assist in introducing newly-appointed academics to their community of practice and also in the research world and publications (Maqubela *et al.* 2016). The process of networking academics will enable them to meet and interact with other academics in the same fields.

e. Role-modelling

The lack of women in senior positions who mentor and encourage other women is a challenging issue facing women. Therefore the institution should facilitate female role models who will inspire women, who can coach, sponsor, protect and increase exposure and visibility of junior female academics. Role models and mentors should be available to introduce women into the writing and publishing world or the community of practice.

f. Promotion Criteria

The institution should consider differentiating the promotion criteria between men and women, women should be given special treatment considering the fact that they have other responsibilities which men do not necessarily have. Female academics should also strive to attain PhDs as this will increase their chances of being promoted

g. Teaching Load

The teaching load of the female lecturers is excessive, especially for junior lecturers. Therefore the institution, deans and faculty managers, should consider reducing the teaching load among female academics to able them to be doing other things such as research and publications. This will help these academics to realise career mobility within the universities.

h. Research

There should be extra support when it comes to women, capacity building and role models should be made available to support women to be involved more in research and encourage or motivate them in doing PhDs. Scholarships should be available and also take into consideration that women have needs.

i. Publication

 The study shows that there is lack of female role models and academic networks, the researcher therefore recommends that there should be capacity-building, female role models and networks provided in order to assist women in building their publication profile. Female academics should have role models who will motivate and encourage them to have a positive approach towards research and publication as well as assist them to have social networks. That will ensure that they are adequately exposed to academic writing which would help in their career development and increase their chances of getting promoted to leadership positions.

j. Community Outreach

The University should adopt policies wherein students engage in voluntary awareness programmes, like programmes of moving around communities educating people on the importance of gender equality and equity. These programs will include educating men on gender issues to avoid resistance and hostility and as a way of fast-tracking transformation.

5.4.2. Recommendations for Female academics

Women in leadership must be seen to be doing things differently, promoting the culture of inclusion and challenging the power status quo, rather than being co-opted into the dominant power structures. Those who have managed to get into high positions should represent the needs of other women. Women in academic leadership can be empowering and can mobilize collective action toward a common good. In addition, women in leadership positions have to challenge established patriarchal and hierarchal styles of leadership, redefine power relations rather than allowing themselves to be co-opted and take risks of advancing the transformation and reconstruction agendas (Iannello, 2010) .

- Female academics should also strive to attain PhDs as this will increase their chances of being promoted
- Female academics should have a positive approach towards research and publication to ensure that they are adequately exposed to academic writing which would help in their career development and increase their chances of getting promoted to leadership positions.
- Female academics should be assisted, guided, and appreciated so that they can be more assertive and progress in their careers. Social support is vital within the institution

5.4.3. Policy makers

This recommendation is directed at the level of policy. It is evident in this research that patriarchal frameworks mitigate against women's career mobility. HEIs must develop a broad gender policy framework, from which HEIs will develop institutional policies. Policy approaches should embrace both equal opportunities and special treatment of women on the basis of their family or care role. Affirmative action policies are important to correct age-old discrimination against women. On the other hand, family-friendly policies should be adopted to assist women to reconcile work and family. Staff development programmes should reinforce gender equality policies and affirmative action schemes (Tsoka & Mathipa 2001). Tsoka & Mathipa (2001) further recommends that any affirmative action meant to empower women must be run by women themselves and not by men for they portray a masculine role-image and not a female

one. Women-centred teaching approaches should be applied as well, so as to create an image of a female-model in the process.

5.5. Suggestion for future research

This section provides suggestions for future research. As indicated in chapter one, this was a small-scale study, a larger scale and comparative study would be of significant importance to establish a comprehensive picture on the topic. This would assist in developing a comprehensive strategy to address the problem of under-representation of women in HEIs. Furthermore, this study involves female academics of a single University. It would be useful to hear men's views on the topic at hand. This will assist policy makers in crafting collective response strategy and mechanism that addresses the challenges that hinder positive change and progress with female academics at higher institutions.

5.6. Research contribution to existing knowledge

The existing research has exposed gender inequalities in most areas of HEIs. Much of the research demonstrated under-representation of women in management and academic positions (Mukangara, 201; Morley, 2013; Obers, 2014). Some authors have explored and brought to the fore barriers faced by women as they navigate career development in HEIs. Other studies looked at strategies and made recommendations to improve the situation women in these institutions. This study has looked deeper into experiences of female academics who are employed in a rural university which is still to a larger extent, patriarchally-oriented. It contributes to the body of knowledge by exposing the root of the problem, that is, the fact that HEIs are masculine-oriented and family-unfriendly. Furthermore this study reveals the lack of institutional support for women taking into consideration that they are held back by cultural beliefs systems and other significant roles they cannot easily run away from. Unlike other studies which have looked at particular aspects that leads to the absence of women in decision making positions at the work place, this study delved into attitudes and perceptions of female academics themselves on leadership positions in HEIs as a way of getting women's voices into the mainstream discourse. The study has also revealed the effective strategy for women empowerment in research and publication, which is the combination of mentoring and training, accompanied by academic networks. It expands on the existing gender equality debates; particularly on the identification and recommendations of appropriate policy approach for the South African context.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Consent form

Institute for Gender and Youth Studies

Informed consent for participation in an academic research study entitled

Title of the research: Exploring experiences of female academics at higher education institution in the Limpopo Province, in South Africa.

Research conducted by: **Abgirl Muleya**

Contact details: cell: +27824836976 email: **abiemleya@yahoo.com**

Dear Respondent

You are invited to participate in an academic research study conducted by Abgirl Muleya, a Masters student from the Institute for Gender and Youth Studies at University of Venda (UNIVEN). This study has received approval from the School of Human Social Sciences as well as Institute for Gender and Youth Studies at Univen. The purpose of the study is to explore the experiences of female academics at higher education institution in Limpopo Universities.

 Please note the following:

- This study involves <u>responding to questionnaires and interview with female academics at the University of Venda</u>. Names will not appear in the findings and the answers given will be treated as strictly <u>confidential</u>. You cannot be identified in person based on the answers you give.

- Your participation in this study is very important to us. You may, however, choose not to participate and you may also stop participating at any time without any negative consequences.

- Please answer the questions as honestly as possible. The interview and questionnaire should not take more than 30 minutes to an hour of your time.

- The results of the study will be used for academic purposes only and may be published in an academic journal. We will provide you with a summary of our findings on request.

- Please contact my course leader, **Dr L.N Maqubela, (Lucille.maqubela@univen.ac.za)**if you have any questions or comments regarding the study.

Please sign the form to indicate that:

- You have read and understand the information provided above.

- You give your consent to participate in the study on a voluntary basis.

_____   _____

Respondent's signature   **Date**

Appendix 2: Biographical information

	Pseudonyms	Name of school	Age group	Marital status	Level of employment
1	Vydia	MNS	45-50	*Single*	Associate professor
2	Tady	HSS	40-45	*Married*	Senior Lecturer
3	Jacky	E.S	40-45	*Married*	Lecturer
4	Pinky	MNS	50-55	*Widowed*	Lecturer
5	Tino	Agric	35-40	*Married*	Lecturer
6	Tamu	Agric	30-35	*Married*	Lecturer
7	Silvia	E.S	40-45	*Single*	Lecturer
8	Clere	BK	40-45	*Married*	Lecturer
9	Brown	HSS	40-45	*Single*	Junior Lecturer
10	Rough	BK	25-30	*Single*	Junior Lecturer
11	Isha	H S	35-40	*Single*	Lecturer
12	Green	Edu	50-55	*Married*	HOD
13	Derika	HSS	50-55	*Single*	Senior Lecturer
14	Popi	Edu	40-45	*Married*	Lecturer
15	Rasham	E.S	55+	*Single*	professor
16	Neetu	MNS	54	*Married*	Senior Lecturer
17	Rachna	HSS	29	*Married*	Senior Lecturer

18	Kamla	Edu	55+	*Married*	Senior Lecturer
19	Phakhie	E.S	33	*Married*	Lecturer
20	Yash	Law	55+	*Widow*	HOD
21	Krish	HSS	47	*Married*	Professor and Dean
22	Samie	Agric	46	*Married*	Lecturer
23	Aliya	EDU	44	*Married*	Senior lecturer
24	Gaury	HSS	45	*Married*	Senior lecturer
25	Ammol	HSS	55+	*Single*	Senior Lecturer

MNS- Mathematics & Natural Sciences

HSS-Human Social Sciences

E S- Environment science

EDU- Education

BK- Biotic Kinetics

Agric-   Agriculture

SCHEDULED INTERVIEWS

SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION/ DATA

Instruction: please choose the appropriate answer by putting a tick in the provided space.

1.   **Age range**

25-30	
30-35	
35-40	
40-45	
45-50	
50-55	
55+	

2.   **Gender**

Female	
Male	

3.   **Marital Status**

Single	
Married	
Widowed	
Divorced	

4. **Racial Group**

African	
Indian	
White	
Coloured	

5. **Level of Employment**

Professor	
Associate professor	
Senior lecturer	
Lecturer	
Junior lecturer	

SECTION B: QUALITATIVE DATA

Tick the appropriate answer where applicable

Challenges of academicians in the higher education institutions

1. Do you think women are adequately represented in the following employment levels? Tick under Yes/No in the table below

Representation in employment	Yes	No	In your opinion what could be the reasons for your response
Executive/Senior Management			
Middle Management			
Deans			
HODs			
Professor			
Associate professor			
Senior Lecturer			
Lecturer			
Junior Lecturer			
Part-Time Lecturer			

2. Where do you think women are concentrated in Academic positions? Choose one or more below:

Academic positions	Yes	No
Professor		

Associate professor		
Senior Lecturer		
Lecturer		
Junior Lecturer		
Assistance Lecturer		
Part-Time Lecturer		

In your opinion why women are concentrated in the position you have indicated?

………
………
………
……….
………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………

3. Have you ever applied for a senior management position at UNIVEN or anywhere else?

Yes	
No	

4. Which position did you apply for?

Vice-Chancellor	
Deputy Vice-Chancellor	
Registrar	

5. What was the outcome of that application?

accepted	
rejected	
Other	

Elaborate

………
………
………
………
………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………

6. Do you think women do apply for managerial positions?

Yes	
No	

Explain your answer.

………
………
………

7. Do you think women have challenges in ascending the academic ladder (in getting promotion)?

Yes	
No	

If yes, outline/ explain them, and if no, explain

………
………

....

....

8. Have you had the challenges yourself?

Yes	
No	

Outline them

....

....

....

....

9. Have you published before?

Yes	
No	

If no why

....

....

10. If yes, how many articles do you publish per annum? ………

11. Do you have any challenges with regards to publishing?

Yes	
No	

Please support your answer

……

……

………

....

12. How many published articles do you have? If any please outline them

……

……

………

....

13. Have you attended any article publication workshop?

Yes	
No	

If yes state how many ………….

14. How have they helped you?

……

……

………

....

15. What support does the university have in assisting academics in career advancement?

……

……

……

…………………………………………………………………… ……………………………………………………

16. Is there any such support directed at women?

Yes	
No	

If yes name them

………

………

………

……..

17. Have you ever been involved in NRF/DST funded research project/ Yes/No

18. If No, why not?

....

....

....

19. If yes, what was your role/position

Project leader	
Researcher	
Research assistant	
Other	

Elaborate your responsibility on the research

………

………

………

………

20. Did you experience any challenges (as a female researcher)?

If   yes,   outline   them

………

………

………

………

21. How many modules do you teach……………

22. How many students for each module, (estimate)?

………

………

………

………

23. How much time for preparation each week?

………

………

………

………

The attitudes of academicians towards Gender Equality at Univen

24. How would you define gender equality?

………

………

……………………………………………………………………………………….....................................

....

25. Do you think men and women should be equal?

Yes	
No	

Please Elaborate

………

………

……………………………………………………………………………………….....................................

....

26. Do you think women are capable of holding leadership positions?

Yes	
No	

Please elaborate

……
……
……
……..

27. Do you think we should have a female Vice Chancellor?

Yes	
No	

Please Elaborate

……
……
……………………………………………………………………..
....

28. Do you think we should have a female Registrar?

Yes	
No	

Please Elaborate

……
……
……
……..

29. Do you think women support women who occupy leadership position at the workplace?

Yes	
No	

Support your answer

………
………
………
....

30. Do you think men support women who occupy leadership position at the workplace?

Yes	
No	

Support your answer

………
………
………
....

31. Are there any other gender related issues that you consider important, if so elaborate suggestions for improvement?

………
………
………
………

Promotion criteria

32. Are you familiar with univen criteria for promotion? Yes\No

Please outline them

………

………

………

……

33. Is the criteria used for promotion the same between men and women?

………

………

………

……

 34. What does it take to meet the promotion criteria at your level for the next level?

………

………

………

……

35. Are you able to meet that criteria?

………

………

………

……

36. If not, how far are you from meeting your criteria?

………

………

……

37. When last were you promoted at univen?

………

………

………

……

From which level …………………………… to which level to what level? ……………………….

38. Do you have challenges in meeting the promotion criteria?

………
………
………
………

39. What challenges do you face in meeting the promotion criteria?

………
………
………
…….

40. Do you know of any policies that address gender equality on campus?

Please outline them

………
………
………
……..