

**AN EXPLORATION OF GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER
LEARNING: THE CASE OF A RURAL UNIVERSITY IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE, SOUTH
AFRICA**

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THOHOYANDOU, LIMPOPO PROVINCE
SOUTH AFRICA**

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DECLARATION

I, Barnabas Okere Chemachukwu of Student number 14006599 hereby declare that this research entitled, "An Exploration Of Gender Mainstreaming In Institutions Of Higher Learning: The Case Of A Rural University In Limpopo Province, South Africa" for the award of a Master's Degree in Gender Studies at University of Venda is my own design and execution and that all references contained therein have been duly acknowledged.

SignatureDate:.....

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DEDICATION

My gratitude goes to my grandmother, the late Mrs Felecia Ada Etho Nwaogbo Okere, who constantly gave me words of hope and courage. From the bottom of my heart and sincere gratitude, I dedicate this work to all the women around the world who are still marginalized by patriarchy, my mother Bridget Ada Egbu, My late Daddy Chief N. Banna Okereafor and to my beloved Dede Shetima Calistus Nkwocha who believed in me and gave me support earlier in life. To my wife, Mrs. Josephine Chinyere Barnabas and my Children (Daniel, Destiny and Blessing) for the tremendous love and support throughout this academic journey. To all the many men and women who brought me up, you remain unforgettable in my life. Let me also thank Professor Unathi Kolanisi for her feedback and advice in making sure that this project becomes the best tool to guide institutions of higher learning in the process of gender mainstreaming.

ACRONYMS

AAU	-	The Association of African Universities
AU	-	African Union
DEOPE	-	Director of Equal Opportunity in Public Employment
DoE	-	Department of Education
GAD	-	Gender and Development
GMP	-	Gender Mainstreaming Programme
HDIs	-	Historical Disadvantaged institutions
IHL	-	Institutions of Higher Learning
KIST	-	Kigali Institute of Science and Technology
MDGs	-	Millennium Development Goals
SADC	-	Southern African Development Community
SARUA	-	Southern African Regional Universities Association
UN	-	United Nations
UN ECOSOC	-	United Nation Economic and Social Council
UNDP	-	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	-	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNEASC	-	United Nation Economic and Social Council
UNIFEM	-	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNIVEN	-	University of Venda

- UNR - The National University of Rwanda
- WID - Women in Development

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

TABLES

Table 4.1 Response rate.....	31
Table 4.2. Age and gender distribution of respondents	32
Table 4.3. Designation and gender distribution of respondents	32
Table 4.4. Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents.....	33
Table 4.5. Identification of gender of senior position holders.....	34
Table 4.6. Respondents perception of gender inequality challenges.....	36
Table 4.7 Attitude to gender mainstreaming.....	39

Figure

Figure 4.1 Women under-representation as Deans, HODs, School Administrators and Director.....	35
Figure 4.2. Strategies to achieve gender parity	38
Figure 4.3 Factors hindering.....	38
Figure 4.4 Attitude to gender Equity	40
Figure 4.5 Attitude of respondents towards gender mainstreaming.....	41

ABSTRACT

Gender mainstreaming has been adopted as a strategy for promoting gender equality in institutions of higher learning worldwide, and not least in Africa. There are perceptions that most strategic higher positions in institutions of Higher learning are dominated by men while women are marginalized. This study therefore explored Gender Mainstreaming in institutions of higher learning. In particular, the study was based at a rural university in Limpopo, South Africa. The study was based on a Feminist Theoretical Framework, where a mixed method approach was embarked upon. The study involved a population of 840 participants who were sampled to 84. Purposive sampling was used to select 9 participants who were interviewed and stratified sampling was used to select a sample of 75 participants who were given questionnaires. The findings of the study are as follows: Males at the University of Venda continue to occupy higher echelons of power. Women continue to be under-represented in the positions of Deans, HODs, School Administrators and Directors. The university has strategies in place for female staff to acquire equal representation in senior management positions. Factors hindering the implementation of the 50/50 parity on gender stem from the lack of commitment from top management, and the stereotyping of women's roles. Some respondents indicated that they do not know of the gender policy at the University of Venda. The university uses the Employment Equity Act of 1998, but, it is not clear whether line managers are aware how it should be implemented. Gender mainstreaming policy is feasible. The study recommends that there should be more gender awareness activities such as workshops, conferences, and symposia for workers and staff members in order to sensitize them about gender mainstreaming.

Key words: representation, gender mainstreaming, institutions, gender equality, management

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Content	Page
DECLARATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv
DEDICATION	v
ACRONYMS	vi
LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES.....	viii
ABSTRACT	ix
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	x
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Background of the study.....	2
1.3 Statement of the Problem.....	4
1.4 Purpose of the study	4
1.5 Objectives of the study.....	4
1.6 Research questions	4
1.7 Significance of the study.....	5
1.8 Definitions of Key Terms.....	5
1.9 Conclusion	6
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	7

2.1 Introduction	7
2.2 The Concept of Gender and Gender Mainstreaming	7
2.3 Mainstreaming Gender in Organisational Structure	8
2.4 Gender Mainstreaming: Global and Continental Trends	10
2.6 Gender Inequality Challenges in institutions of higher learning	14
2.7 The SADC Gender Protocol Unit and its Role in Gender Mainstreaming	16
2.8 Theoretical Framework.....	19
2.9 Conclusion	21
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	22
3.1 Introduction	22
3.2 Research approach.....	22
3.3 Research design	23
3.4 Description of the study area.....	23
3.5 Entry into the study area	24
3.6 Population and Sample	25
3.7 Sampling Techniques.....	25
3.8 Data collection	26
3.9 Data Analysis	27
3.10 Research Limitations.....	28
3.11 Ethical Considerations	28

3.11.1 Ensuring that permission is sought and granted	28
3.11.2 Getting Informed Consent.....	29
3.11.3 Ensuring Confidentiality and Anonymity.....	29
3.11.4 Securing Appointment to fill questionnaire and interview.....	29
3.12 Conclusion	30
CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND DATA INTERPRETATION.....	31
4.1 Introduction.....	31
4.2 Quantitative Data	31
4.2.1 Demographic data	31
4.2.5. Responses on Attitude towards Gender Mainstreaming.....	40
4.2.6. Attitude of Respondents towards Gender Mainstreaming	40
DATA ON THE INTERVIEWED PARTICIPANTS.....	41
4.2.7. Qualitative Data	41
4.2.7.1. Meaning of Gender Mainstreaming.....	41
4.2.7.2. Experience of Gender Mainstreaming	42
4.2.7.3. Gender mainstreaming is fair to some and unfair to others.....	42
4.2.7.5. Low participation of women in meetings and managerial positions	43
4.2.7.6. On Gender equity	44
4.2.7.9. Assistance for women	45
4.2.7.12. Gender and Promotion	47

4.2.7.13 Implementation of Gender mainstreaming policy	47
4.2.7.14 Attitudes towards Gender Mainstreaming	48
4.2.7.15 Conclusion	49
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	50
5.1 Introduction	50
5.2 Conclusions	50
REFERENCES.....	52
APPENDICES	62
Appendix 1: Research Questionnaire.....	62
INSTRUCTIONS	62
Appendix 2: Informed Consent Form	69

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

Gender equality has attracted significant global attention in recent times. Gender equality is a widely recognised concept in International Law since the adoption of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights in United Nations (UN). According to Adebayo & Akanle, (2014) the Millennium declaration recognised the equal rights and opportunities for both genders. It enjoys popular support in many United Kingdom, US, Australia, Uganda, South Africa etc (Ramachandran, 2010). Gender mainstreaming means identifying gaps in gender inequality through the use of gender analysis and sex-disaggregated data, raising awareness about the gaps, building support for change through advocacy and partnerships, developing strategies in order to close existing gaps, putting adequate resources and the necessary expertise into place, monitoring implementation and holding individuals and institutions accountable for results (Puri, 2013; Mabundza *et al*, 2014).

The concept of gender mainstreaming is a deliberate strategy applied where gender inequality is structured or exists. Gender mainstreaming highlights the different needs and problems of women and men in order to ensure that management policies and practices are not based on inappropriate assumptions and stereotypes (Mabundza *et al*, 2014). Gender mainstreaming is an international phenomenon originating from development policies, which were also adopted from the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action at the United Nation Women's Conference (UNDP, 2012). Gender mainstreaming has brought women issues at the center stage, elevating them to major policy problems and it has brought the importance of gender-based power structures to book. In order to mainstream gender in institutions of higher learning it is important to understand how the components of the institutional management hierarchy operate. Institutions of higher learning are crucial centers for economic development and women empowerment. Therefore, gender mainstreaming in institutions of Higher Learning is crucial in their operations, if they are to meet their mandate.

Gender mainstreaming requires evaluating the implications for men and women regarding policies or programs that are geared towards redressing gender imbalances (Puri, 2013). Thus, the socially constructed roles of females and males are responsibilities assigned to females and males on the basis of their gender (Blandford *et al*, 2011). For instance FAWE, (2013) posted that

higher institutions where there are no formal gender-responsive strategies for recruitment, promotion and other activities will result in gender imbalance.

Gender mainstreaming is the opposite policy strategy of segregating genders used when the objective is to foster the participation of women in development in order to address gender inequalities (Langeveld *et al*, 2012). The definition of gender mainstreaming given by the United Nation Economic and Social Council, (UNEASC) has been adopted by many gender experts such as Thobejane, 2014 ..This definition states that gender mainstreaming is the practice of assessing gender roles of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes in all areas and at all stages (Puri, 2013). Vardanyan (2014), stresses that effective gender mainstreaming should be context and content oriented in every institution. This suggests that there should be gender audit, profiling and provision for a quantitative picture of the status of women and men in the employment circle at any institution.

1.2 Background of the study

It has been more than two decades since Fourth World Conference on Women which came up with the Beijing Platform for Action, (the Beijing Declaration) in 1995. Since then, there has been a significant progress on gender equality through gender mainstreaming (UNDP, 2012). The shift of emphases from Women in Development (WID) to Gender and Development (GAD) calls for attention on women and men relationships. Thus, Gender and Development (GAD) approach advocates for gender mainstreaming and argues that sustainable development is only possible if men and women are equally represented in management levels (Ministry of Women's Affairs, 2009). Gender parity and women empowerment are considered to be an essential part of the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) hence, the marginalisation of women around the globe has affected economic development and the achievement of MDGs (Lehohla, 2013).

Despite the global acceptance of the gender mainstreaming doctrine, gender inequalities still exist in many organisations around the world and institutions of higher learning are no exception. Gender mainstreaming is a universally accepted strategy for promoting gender equality. It is an approach that can be used to achieve gender equality in institutions of Higher learning, through creation of awareness among academic, non-academic staff and other professionals engaged in tertiary institutions (Ramachandran, 2010). Gender inequality is a social and global problem irrespective of the class of institution or nation, therefore, it calls for scholarly intervention. A study

carried out at the University of Tirana, Albani, on gender mainstreaming conditions, asserts that gender mainstreaming has revealed an overwhelming presence of men in key positions, while women occupied lower positions. Despite the passing of the legislations which seek to empower women, the position of women is far from satisfactory (UNESCO, 2011). In Australian universities gender imbalance remains despite the fact that there are more women participating in those universities.

According to the Director of Equal Opportunity in Public Employment (DEOPE) Annual Report, (2012) in Australia, most men in the University Sector are employed as academics, while women are more likely to be employed as non-academic staff. The equity index for female staff members remained at 82 in 2012. Only 25% of women occupy management positions. Management representation of women slightly decreased from 40% in 2011 to 39.1% in 2012 and from 41.4 % to 36.4% in 2012.

In the Asia Pacific Region, lack of institutional support and networking for women hinders women's entry to top positions in institutions of higher learning (Bhatkal, 2014). When jobs are scarce men have more right to jobs than women, since it is believed that university education is more important for a boy than a girl child (Ramachandran, 2010). The gender problems at institutions of Higher learning in the Asian Pacific region are interfaced with wealth-based disparities. For instance, women are more likely to acquire entrances to public universities and less likely to get entrances for private universities than men because of the high costs of private institutions of higher learning.

Women in Africa are under-represented in public institutions at local and national levels and have little say in decision-making (Adegun, 2012), In most academic institutions, women are unrecognized and discriminated against, because men have dominated the upper echelons of institutions of higher learning for a long period of time (Jansen, 2014). The objective of this study was to explore gender mainstreaming of academic and non-academic staff members at the University of Venda. The study reviewed the reasons for women under-representation and possible strategies on how to mainstream gender within the structure of the University. Gender mainstreaming policy documents of the institution was assessed in order to find out if the University complies with the national, regional and international gender mainstreaming instruments. The study also provides discussions on promotion criteria, staff member's attitude and gender mainstreaming implementation in the context of the University of Venda.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

According to Adegun (2012), Gender discrimination exists in every society but, the problem is common in Africa because of the continent's patriarchal tradition which has serious implications on institutions of higher learning. In most institutions of higher learning, women are marginalised and these institutions lack the integration of gender equality in their operations. Men have an upper hand in management, while women are underrepresented in senior management and middle management positions. In spite of the various equity Acts and affirmative action programmes, gender issues remain a concern in most academic institutions in the Republic of South Africa. The analysis of the relationship between positions and gender mainstreaming is primarily a technical process in relation to women empowerment. It has been observed that in most universities, women are under-represented in major positions of authority, such as Vice Chancellor position, Deputy Vice Chancellor, Registrar position, Deanship, Directors and Heads of Departments.

1.4 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to explore gender mainstreaming of academic and non-academic staff members at the University of Venda, situated in Limpopo, South Africa.

1.5 Objectives of the study

In order to achieve the purpose of the study, the following objectives were pursued:

- To determine gender inequality challenges at the University of Venda.
- To identify gender mainstreaming structures at the University of Venda.
- To examine the implications of attitudes of staff members and management on gender mainstreaming at the University of Venda.

1.6 Research questions

In order to obtain answers that address these research objectives, the following research questions were formulated:

- What are the gender inequality challenges at the University of Venda?
- How is gender mainstreamed within the structures of the University?

- How do attitudes of staff members and management impact gender mainstreaming at the University of Venda?

1.7 Significance of the study

This study will add to the existing literature on gender mainstreaming and gender equality application in institutions of higher learning. The findings will help provide an insight on how to mainstream gender during the process of appointment and promoting staff to major management positions in public institutions. This study will be aligned to UNIVEN's vision of research that drives critical innovative and relevant research in the pursuit of knowledge and development of local, national and international communities irrespective of race, religion or gender. It will benefit the institution stakeholders to align with gender parity protocol of South Africa as well as future research in order to fill in the research gaps.

1.8 Definitions of Key Terms

Gender - refers to an array of socially constructed roles, relationships, personality traits, attitudes, behaviours, values, relative power and influence that society ascribes (Middleton-Lee, 2016). In the context of this study, gender means the roles performed by female and male staff members, the values ascribed to these roles and the relative power they wield.

Mainstreaming - means the centre stage where choices are considered, decisions that affect socio-economic and political agenda are made; providing opportunities and rationale for the resource allocation. In this study mainstreaming will mean putting gender dynamics at the forefront of decision making.

Gender mainstreaming - is the process of assessing the implications of any planned action on women and men, including legislation, policies or programs, in all areas and at all levels (Puri, 2013). It is an adopted strategy for consistently incorporating sensitivity to gender differences in governance, decision-making, policy, needs analysis, institutional offices and mechanisms, planning, budgeting, implementation, monitoring and evaluation in institutions, so as to create a platform that is gender equitable (Vardanyan, 2014). In the context of this study, gender mainstreaming will mean the role performed by female and male staff members, while taking into account gender dynamics, in order to eliminate inequalities and discrimination among staff members

Institution - in the context of this study, institution means an accredited body that is authorised to provide training towards gainful employment. It is also composed of systems of established and prevalent social rules that structure social interactions, such as Language, law systems, firms and other organisations (Hodgson, 2006).

Gender relations- are the ways in which a culture or society defines rights, responsibilities and the identities of both sexes in relation to one another (Bravo-Baumann, 2000). This study describes gender relations as the way in which institutions of higher learning describes the relations between female and male staff members.

Gender roles- are the different tasks, responsibilities and expectations that society has defined and allocated to women, men, girls as well as boys (Smulders, 1998). In the context of this study, gender role means the different roles female and male staff members play at the institution of higher learning.

Patriarchy- is a system in which the male is the primary authority in a given social organisation. Men assume the overall power within the system (Mhlanga, 2013). In the context of this study, patriarchy means a system highly regards male staff members at the expense of female staff members.

1.9 Conclusion

The chapter established that gender imbalance exists in every society but, the problem is common in Africa because of the patriarchal tradition which has critical effects on higher institutions of learning. In most institutions of higher learning, men have long dominated the upper echelons of power while women remain marginalized.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on studies conducted on gender mainstreaming. The chapter also reviews literature on gender mainstreaming in South African institutions of higher learning, these include the South Africa Gender inequality Challenges and the SADC Gender Protocol Unit Role's in gender mainstreaming. Literature on global and continental trends of gender mainstreaming is also reviewed.

2.2 The Concept of Gender and Gender Mainstreaming

The United Nations (UNDP, 2012) asserts that gender equality and women empowerment mandate is universal among the Member States and encompasses all areas of peace, development and human rights. The mandates on gender equality derived from the United Nations Charter, unequivocally reaffirmed the equal rights of women and men. In 1974, United Nations proclaimed the International Decade for Women in recognition of the fact that women are adversely marginalized and virtually underrepresented in all endeavours.

Middleton-Lee, (2016) defined Gender as the array of socially constructed roles relationships, personality traits, attitudes, behaviours, values, relative power and influence that society ascribes to the two sexes on a differential basis. Whereas biological sex is determined by genetic and anatomical characteristics. Gender is an acquired identity that is learned; it changes over time, and varies widely within and across cultures. Gender is relational and refers not simply to women or men but, to the relationship between them. Mabundza *et al*, (2014), define gender as the social differences between women and men in a society at a particular time. Gender differs from one culture to another, and its characteristics change over time. Gender systems are rooted in different socio-economic contexts which determine what is expected, allowed and valued in a female and male in their specific contexts. These roles and adoption of these traits can create gender inequities. The term “gender” is complex and means so many things depending on what one seeks to address. In the context of the University of Venda, (UNIVEN), where this study took place, “gender” means the role performed by female and male staff members, the values ascribed to them and the relative power they employ. This study described gender relations as the way in which institutions of higher learning describe the relations between female and male staff members.

The definition is largely based on the hierarchy of male andragogy which seems to dominate especially in the Vhembe Region, where University Venda is located. However, in recent years, the University has been trying to comply with the provisions of the Bill of Rights in constitution and the outcomes of the Beijing Conference which was held in 1995. What then is the concept of gender mainstreaming?

According to Nyarko and Eshun, (2013) women who represented about 50% of the world's total population did not have a fair share of the available resources and access to opportunities. Consequently, women attracted the focus and attention of international Conferences organised by the United Nations in Mexico City in 1955, Nairobi in 1985 and Beijing China in 1995. The gender mainstreaming concept was first proposed by the United Nations at the 1985 Third World Conference on Women in Nairobi. The idea was formally featured at the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing.

The main purpose of Gender Mainstreaming was to ensure that gender parity exists among women and men from all that society has to offer. This include equal empowerment to governance and decisions. According to United Nation Women, gender equality is the overarching and long-term development goal, while gender mainstreaming is a set of specific, technical and institutional strategic approaches (United Nation Women, 2014). Gender mainstreaming also integrates gender equality in public and private organisations. In the long run, it aims at transforming discriminatory social institutions, laws, cultural norms and community practices, such as those restricting women's access to public space. Therefore, in the context of this study, gender mainstreaming means the role performed by staff members while taking into account gender dynamics to eliminate inequalities and discrimination among academic and non-academic staff members (women and men) in their activities.

South African Universities, such as the University of Venda (UNIVEN), have the obligation to gender mainstream their institution in the fulfilment of the global gender equality mandate. Similar to other UN member states, these efforts should be well integrated into overall University operational functions (United Nation Women, 2014).

2.3 Mainstreaming Gender in Organisational Structure

According to Lombardo (2013), gender mainstreaming is a network of structures, mechanisms and processes that are put in place within an organisation's framework to guide, plan, monitor and evaluate gender equity. Gender mainstreaming requires all public policies to counter gender bias,

reorganise policy structures and gender perspective. Siachitema *et al.*, (2012) affirmed that higher institutions are a place where knowledge is generated through research; women and men are expected to participate in academic and non-academic activities so as to generate holistic knowledge about both perspectives. It becomes crucial that University curricula pay attention to the structures of inequality and gender related issues.

Fischer *et al.*, (2012) defined institutions as the rules and structures that shape the social, economic, and political transactions within a society in achieving social or economic ends. They determine who gets what, who does what, and who makes which decision. World Bank Group, (2012) notes that institutions include values that maintain the gendered division of labour, prohibitions of women's mobility and participation in decision making . Institutional rules may be clearly written or implicit, however, they are different across cultures, constantly changing, and are embedded in relational hierarchies of gender, class and other critical fault lines. These institutional rules are often below the surface but, are intertwined into hierarchies, work practices and organisational beliefs. Research contends that all organisational attributes are structured to adapt to the demands of labour conventions and cultures at workplaces. These attributes operate under the auspices of both inner and outer institutional structures, rules, norms and assumptions, which are linked to gender (Brown-Brock, *et al.*, 2015). For many reasons, some are structured on a historical basis, some are inherent, some are specific to cultural contexts and some are specific for the development of administrations which shape the gendered organisational structures.

When considering structures and organisational hierarchy in most institutions, research claim that the most notable proponent of structural approaches are the structure of opportunity, the structure of power and the proportional distribution of women and men (Timmers *et al.*, 2009). It will take several decades for women to achieve parity with men at the top rank in institutions because of the small number of women in academia is s and the slow opening new positions. From the researcher's point of view, an appropriate management structure is required to support the transformation of a university structure, in terms of gender relations.

Gender mainstreaming in an organisational structure such as higher institutions implies that gender mainstreaming activities are applied to the entire spectrum of the university functions, such as teaching, research and community service, at top management hierarchy and other human resource competences (Salm *et al.*, 2014). Hence, gender mainstreaming in organisational structures involves sensitivity to gender differences in governance, decision-making, needs analysis, institutional offices, mechanisms, planning, budgeting, implementation, monitoring and

evaluation of an institution's policy so as to create gender equity in an organisation (Vardanyan, 2014). The structure of higher institutions in Africa shows that women and men bear cultural meanings and representations that reflect power relations within a patriarchal society. Hence, there is a wider gender gap at institutions of higher learning in Africa.

Inequality in organisations continues to be a key research agenda in academic discourses (Nwajiuba, 2011). Despite the fact that they have the qualifications, women have been denied employment opportunities in Nigeria because employers felt that the women would be a distractive influence to career men in the university laboratories (Adegun, 2012), Patriarchal and cultural practices limit women's opportunities to attain higher positions in institutions of higher learning. Hence men are overrepresented in employment and leadership positions. Workers in an organisation, irrespective of their gender are expected to have quality management skills, education and experience, which eliminates gender disparities through effective leadership. However, there is gender role distinction which has created opportunity gaps in Nigerian universities (Gberevbie *et al*, 2014).

Therefore this study examined the reasons behind female under-representation and possible strategies on how to mainstream the gender of staff members within University structures.

The study also provides discussions on the implementation of gender mainstreaming at the University of Venda.

2.4 Gender Mainstreaming: Global and Continental Trends

Gender disparity is a global trend that has contributed to the failure of states to meet the millennium development goals (MDG), because women are still under-represented in leadership positions. Research abounds with the historical experiences of women's status in institutions of higher learning around the world. Women's under-representation in senior management positions in institutions of higher learning around the world is an issue of concern (Thomas, 2012).

Available literature shows that in countries such as Australia, the United Kingdom, Sweden, and the United States, gender imbalance is a challenge despite the enactment of the gender equity legislation (Deloitte Global Services Limited, 2013). The dominance of men in senior management positions in institutions of higher learning is overwhelming. For instance, the

exclusion of women from top academic jobs is worrying in the United Kingdom (Morley, 2013). The numbers of women represented in academic and non-academic positions were 44% and 28%, respectively in 2009 and 2010, while men in senior management positions comprised of 55.7% and 72.0% during the same years. Morley, (2013) argue that women's participation in educational management and decision making is vital in achieving equity. Male prevalence in senior leadership positions is visible in countries with diverse policies and legislations for gender equality. Even when women are physically present as staff members, they are often excluded from decision-making. Research show that men and women are equally capable of assuming senior management positions. However, discriminatory appointment and promoting practices negatively impact on women. Absence of policies and legislations to ensure that women participate in such positions are not included in many institutions (Maürtin-Cairncross, 2014).

Institutions of higher learning structures, handles gender inequality in the same manner with rural village, socio-cultural settings, Men believe that for a woman to be appointed to a senior position, she must be as bold and strong as a man. Women were also denied educational opportunities and excluded from taking up leading roles in education and society at large (Coetzee, 2001).

In Nigeria, the gender equity gap of University management is attributed to pre-colonial patriarchal traditions. In that context, leadership was often viewed as the idea of masculinity and the belief that men make better managers than women also contribute to the cause (Eboiyehi *et al* 2016). The effects of cultural and traditional values as well as reproduction of gender power relations between women and men negatively impacts on women in the academic environment.

The African society is still gender-blind and management has always excluded women in leadership and decision-making processes (Oti, 2013). Modupe, (2014) affirmed that gender-blind policies lead to the persistent gender gap in institutions of higher learning throughout Africa. For instance, female enrolment and completion in the institutions of higher learning influences their chances of securing an academic or administrative position in universities. Traditional and patriarchal African societies recognise men's role as leaders in the business world (Panigrahi, 2013).

A study conducted by UNESCO, (2006) on African universities indicated that the majority of senior management positions were held by men. Eboiyehi *et al*, (2016) upheld that the number of women in policy decision-making bodies in African universities is lower than the number of men.

The capacity of women managers and administrators to influence change in African universities' context is absent or weak.

In Nigeria, women are excluded from negotiating tables, hold less than 35% of the academic positions and dominate the lower level administrative positions (Eboiyehi *et al*, 2016). Adegun, (2012) notes that female participation in Nigerian universities decreases at a high rate compared to men. At the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, the decrease ratio of male and female is from 73% to 27%, while at the University of Ilorin, from 88.4 % to 11.6. The Punch News, (2015) (cited by Eboiyehi *et al*, 2016) noted that since the establishment of the first university in Nigeria in 1948, only 12 women have so far occupied the position of university vice-chancellor in both federal, state and private universities.

Indicators of the unwelcoming atmosphere of institutions of higher learning were identified by Mlama, (1998) as characterised by its 'maleness'. In Rwanda, Rubagiza 2004 documented the proportion of academic staff at the two largest institutions of higher learning (The National University of Rwanda (UNR) and Kigali Institute of Science and Technology (KIST), and found that women constituted 21% of the academic staff while men represented 79% of the staff in 2004 (Ministry of Education Rwanda 2004). There is a continued under-representation of women in higher institutions in Africa; academic and non-academic positions reinforces evidence of entrenched male dominance and consequently a gender biased society.

The Association of African Universities (AAU) (2006) observes that women often occupy clerical and secretarial positions, while very few universities have policy plans on gender equality in employment, staff development, and polices on other social vices such as sexual discrimination. In many African institutions of higher learning, gender issues are regarded with fear and are seen as Westernized and un-African. The existing patriarchal mentality and stereotypes in African societies are internalised and they also manifest in institutions of higher learning. Unfortunately, few universities in Africa are yet to implement gender policies and regulations in their administrative structures and academic programmes. Thus, the *existence* of gender inequalities and lack of a fertile female population in institutions of higher learning.

2.5 Gender Mainstreaming in institutions of higher learning in South Africa

Gender equality is one of the ideals enshrined in the South Africa Bill of Rights of the 1996 constitution. However gender disparities persist and contribute to some of the national challenges

(Moloi *et al*, 2014). Patriarchy was a key feature employed during colonialism and the apartheid era, which shaped all the areas of social life, including institution of higher learning in South Africa. The constitution embeds equality, but, people still have attitudes, and patriarchal practices that continue to hinder women's freedom.

According to Msila, (2007) education is not a neutral act, but, it is always paraded with political intentions. In South Africa, under the apartheid era, the institutions of higher learning were divided according to race and this enhanced divisions in the South African society.

During that period there were Afrikaans universities which used Afrikaans as a medium of instruction; liberal universities which used English as a medium of instruction and the black universities, commonly referred to as Historical Disadvantaged Institutions (HDIs), (Southern African Regional Universities Association, 2012). However, in 1994 during the Reformation, all previously separate 'black and white' institutions of higher learning were merged and renamed 'University'. The gender policy during the apartheid era gave rise to gender imbalance, exploitation and discrimination of women (South African History Online, 2016).

Chapter 3 of the Employment Equity Act of 1998 is dedicated to affirmative action and requires all employers, including institutions of higher learning to work towards achieving employment equity. Generally, the cry for gender balance is not satisfactory in the gender equity profiles of South African Universities. Part of the Employment Equity Act, requires that institutions of higher learning to provide skills and development for affirmative action for employees to perform well in their positions. Thus, university employees require high skills, specialisation and qualifications for most of the positions.

The University of Venda (UNIVEN), like any other University in South Africa, upholds the prescript of the constitution and national target on equity. According to UNIVEN's Strategic Plan of 2012-2016, women are specified as groups for which affirmative action will be applied. The UNIVEN plan relies on line managers, such as the Vice Chancellor, Deputy Vice Chancellor, Registrar, Deans, Directors and Heads of Departments to carry out organisational duties (University of Venda Calendar, 2014). The perceptions are that most strategic positions in the institutions of higher learning are still male dominated. For instance, gender sensitivity is not mentioned in the UNIVEN Strategic Plan of 2012-2016 (UNIVEN, 2012). These, however, present important research gaps necessitating broad strategies that target gender relations because of the current representation of women. In terms of employment equity, both female and male staff has equal

chances of being employed since the University uses the South African Employment Equity Act of 2004.

Research shows that most South African universities contributed to the gender imbalances during the Apartheid Political Era which ended in 1994. Statistics show that not many women acquired university education and there is no financial assistance for the women. Financial aid was also not readily available (SARUA, 2012). A study carried out on women who are in positions of leadership in institutions of higher learning indicated that despite the bleak picture painted about their status during the Apartheid era, women were able to make some strides in fighting for their rights and to decentralise structures which were oppressive in governance and management (SARUA, 2012). Therefore, it implies that there are still gender imbalances in the top management hierarchies of some of the South African universities which necessitated a study. Therefore, this study analyses gender mainstreaming amongst staff members at the University of Venda.

2.6 Gender Inequality Challenges in institutions of higher learning

UNIFEM, (1995) described gender equality as a discussion around the possibility of effecting changes in societal structures. This helps to maintain equality in power relationships between women and men and balance their values and priorities.

The European Union has made significant progress on gender equality in institutions of higher learning which is linked to equal treatment in employment (Sebola, 2015). However, women achieving equality with men in other aspects of academia rank could still be difficult. In the UK gender equity in relation to academic leadership is bright compared with universities in India. In UK universities, 14% of the Vice-Chancellors are women while in India 3% of the Vice Chancellors are women (Machika, 2014). International indices show different gender gaps in universities globally. For instance, in Japan women constitute 12.7 % of the research-intensive faculties in universities (Assman, 2014; Sebola, 2015).

In Africa, there has always been the belief that men make better leaders than women and men lead and women must follow (Eboiyehi *et al.*, 2016). Thus, traditional African societies have always recognised men as leaders and their leadership roles are superior to women (Gobena, 2014, Eboiyehi *et al.*, 2016). It is not surprising that there are gender equity gaps in most university management in African institutions of higher learning. This is linked to pre-colonial patriarchal arrangements whereby boys were equipped with occupational skills and girls were equipped with reproductive functions (Eboiyehi *et al.*, 2016). According to the Association of African Universities

(2006) (cited by Sebola, 2015) some male African academics view gender equity as a Western sponsored ideology meant to erode the African culture.

In Africa, Rwanda has demonstrated to be a good model of gender equity in areas such as politics, business, health and primary education level. However, the institutions of higher learning are far from satisfactory. The two major institutions in the capital, Kigali, namely the National University of Rwanda and the Kigali Institute of Science Rwanda affirms the inequity. In these two institutions, women are less represented, while men constituted more than 80% of the staff members (Sebola, 2015). This shows that women still lag behind in leadership positions across institutions of higher learning and there are challenges in the attempts to correct these inequalities.

In Nigeria, there is a high rate of women exclusion and discrimination in major decision processes in universities (Eboiyehi *et al*, 2016). Most women are employed in the lowest positions in the academy and the composition of women in management boards is still very low compared to their men folks. In recognition of the gender discrimination, the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria provides for non-discrimination and gender parity for millennium development goals (Gbadamosi, 2014).

South Africa is regarded as a highly patriarchal society with most of the institutions upholding patriarchal values. Since the 1995 Beijing conference, South Africans are yet to see some of its policies translated into action. According to Thobejane (2014), the class structure inherent to the South African society is highly gendered. The patriarchy ideologies justify discrimination between sexes and the oppression of women. Most university institutions privilege men at the expense of women. Hence women are at the bottom of the ladder. Maürtin-Cairncross, (2014) argued that historical dominance of males over females is a result of patriarchal norms which determined the social order.

Men in pre- and post-Apartheid South Africa have benefitted from patriarchy. Black men were concerned about male oppression and capitalist exploitation. They believed that there are privileges and powers they should possess as men and this negated the recognition of women leadership in institutions of higher learning of higher learning structures (Morley and Crossouard, 2014). Even when women are appointed to academic leadership positions in institutions of higher learning, patriarchal structures never allowed them to demonstrate strong leadership and in most cases were removed before their term expired (Sebola, 2015). The effects of patriarchy on

leadership in institutions of higher learning perpetuate gender imbalance in our society (Coetzee, 2001).

The critical issue is whether women are represented in management within the institution of higher learning. Studies reveal that common impediments hinder equity attainment but not limited to education attainment and patriarchal syndrome. Various literatures have confirmed that social reality challenges prevent women from excelling in management as men. Women often have responsibilities that compromise of their potential to achieve managerial success within the walls of higher institutions. Thus, most women that cope in managerial positions are forced to abandon other activities like taking care of their children at home (Sebola, 2015). According to the researcher's opinion, the continued underrepresentation and marginalisation of women in the institution of higher learning reflect gender imbalance and the institution are not benefiting from women in problem-solving.

2.7 The SADC Gender Protocol Unit and its Role in Gender Mainstreaming

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) Protocol on Gender and Development supports gender mainstreaming by considering a wide range of platforms and topics that need to change to better support gender equity and equality. Article 4 on Constitutional Rights to Article 31 on Media, the Protocol on Gender and Development considers gender issues as central to all areas of development.

The centrality of gender mainstreaming as a development strategy was acknowledged right from the creation of SADC as articulated in the Declaration and Treaty of SADC of 1992 and as revised in 2004. The undertaking to respect the principles of Human Rights, democracy and the rule of law as well as equity, balance and mutual benefit is explicit in Article 4. A critical step was undertaken to specifically address issues of gender inequality in 1996 through the establishment of the Gender Unit and further by SADC Heads of State and Governments adopting the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development and its Addendum on the Prevention and Eradication of Violence Against Women and Children in 1997 and 1998, respectively. SADC has committed to placing gender firmly on the agenda of the SADC Programme of Action and Community Building Initiative. In 1997, the SADC Council of Ministers adopted the SADC Gender Policy. Ministers Responsible for Gender and women's Affairs also adopted the SADC Gender Mainstreaming Toolkit (2009) and the SADC Gender Workplace Policy.

The review of the operations of the SADC institutions based on the vision, mission, common agenda and principles of the community culminated in the development of the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP).

The Plan guides the Member States, SADC Institutions, regional stakeholders and International Cooperating partners in the process of deepening integration to turn the Community's vision into a reality for a period of 15 years. In this fundamental document, gender has been defined as one of the integration and development enablers and a cross- sectoral intervention area.

These require that all Directorates and Units and all Sectors in the Member States must integrate gender issues into their business plans as an integral part of their work. It also presumes that the actors in question have the necessary skills to analyse their sector for intervention so as to identify gender issues therein and define mechanisms for integrating them into the policies, plans, programmes and actions programmed for implementation. In view of the knowledge and application gap that exists in effectively mainstreaming gender in SADC Structures and Institutions, the SADC Gender Unit has developed a Gender Mainstreaming Programme [GMP]. The principle objectives of the gender-mainstreaming programme in SADC are to:

Put in place the necessary institutional mechanisms, operational guidelines and to promote a culture that will facilitate gender mainstreaming in the Secretariat;

- Build the capacity of the staff of the Secretariat and SADC Member States to systematically develop, implement and sustain gender mainstreamed plans, strategies and programmes on an on-going basis;
- Ensure that the necessary human and financial resources for gender mainstreaming are mobilised for training; capacity building and programme implementation; and
- Ensure that the commitments of the integration and development objectives to gender equality and women's empowerment are effectively implemented at the Member State level (SADC, 2008).

The SADC Gender Unit was established in June 1996, following the decision by SADC Heads of States to establish a coordinating mechanism for gender equality and women's empowerment at the regional level. The Unit also required coordinating initiatives to mainstream gender perspectives and concerns in their policies, plans and programmes of community building. In

view of this, the Gender Unit facilitates gender mainstreaming in all SADC institutions through the following activities:

- Working to support all the structures and institutions to mainstream gender in their policies, programmes and activities;
- Building capacity for gender analysis to facilitate planning for programmes and projects;
- Sensitise, enrol, engage and empower our stakeholders to understand, appreciate and make the case for gender concerns and priorities; and
- Developing and providing the technical guidance in accelerating and strengthening gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment programmes (SADC 2008).

The overall strategies for SADC Member States on Gender and Development as stipulated by the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) are as follows:

- Accelerate the development of explicit gender policies and strengthen the national gender coordination machinery; harmonies them at regional level, and develop a regional gender policy;
- Ratify International instruments on gender equality, incorporate their provisions into national laws through constitutional and legislative reforms, and set up appropriate enforcement mechanisms and institutions to deliver necessary services;
- Mainstream gender into all sectoral policies, programmes and activities at national and regional level through gender responsive planning, policy development and implementation, gender capacity building and training and the collection of gender-disaggregated data;
- Adopt women's economic empowerment policies and strategies in order to address the inequalities in access to and control of resources; develop specific programmes and put in place gender-responsive budgeting initiatives;
- Adopt deliberate and positive measures such as affirmative action, with a view to accelerating gender equality in political and decision-making positions;
- Implement gender capacity building and training programmes at national and regional levels and disseminate best practices to ensure wide-spread diffusion; and
- Eradicate and reduce all forms of violence against women and children (SADC 2008).

According to the researcher's understating, the implementation of the SADC Protocol on gender mainstreaming policy is ineffective in most Universities within the region. However, the University

of Venda (UNIVEN), like any other university in Southern Africa, upholds the prescription of the SADC Development Community Protocol on Gender and Development goal, thus it becomes important that the study established the status of University of Venda (UNIVEN) in implementing the SADC gender mainstreaming policy in order to gauge the potential of gender parity being realised and how effective was its policy implementation within the boundaries of the university.

2.8 Theoretical Framework

This study analyses gender mainstreaming of staff members and examines the extent of gender inequality and discrimination at an institution of higher learning. The study employed feminist theory. Feminism can be viewed as the women's struggle for liberation and it encompasses epistemologies, methodologies, theories, and modes of activism that seek to bring an end to the oppression and subordination of women by men (Hooks, 2005). According to Ahikire (2014), feminism is a myriad of various theoretical perspectives emanating from the complexities and specifics of the different material conditions as well as women's identities they also contest for power relations in private and public lives.

The theoretical perspectives of gender are grouped into different ideological underpinnings to explain gender development and how the society continues to create unequal gender status. Feminist researchers look at the ways in which gender does and ought to influence our conceptions of knowledge, with a concern on how to understand gendered relations. It has been a concern among researchers in the past that empirical research focused on issues that concern men and ignored women experiences in constructing knowledge. Several practitioners of feminist research contend that dominant knowledge practices disadvantage women by excluding them from the inquiry. According to Kronsell and Svedberg (2012), hegemonic masculinity gives men access to power and privilege over women; this hegemonic masculinity is one of the issues that need to be tackled when addressing structures of organisations in gender mainstreaming. Thus, the ideological aim of the feminist approach is to correct women's relegation and end their unequal social position and marginalisation.

Pasque and Nicholson, (2011) posit that feminist theories aim to understand women's oppression and how to overcome their obstacles in life.

Feminists fight for gender equality and argue that women should share equally in society's opportunities and scarce resources. Drawing on the work of several feminist thinkers, there are

many strands of Feminist Theories, which include Liberal feminism, Marxist feminism, Radical feminism, Socialist feminism and African Feminism, to mention a few. These strands are relevant for this study as it looks at the peculiar nature of gender. They are as follows:

- Liberal Feminism: This epistemology works within the structure of mainstream society to integrate women into its structure. Women have legal equality with men, but they still do not have status equality with men in the society. This implies that males still have higher social status than women. Liberal Feminism advocates for the elimination of male superiority and looks at the root cause of women's oppression in patriarchal gender relations; and women share common interest in freeing themselves from male oppression (Thobejane, 2014).
- Marxist Feminism: Women perform a domestic and subservient role for men in which women are disadvantaged and are marginalised. This kind of feminism benefits men because they do not have to pay women to get certain services. So Division of labour is related to gender role expectations (Thobejane, 2014, Hill-Collins, 2009).
- Socialist Feminism: This strand of feminism claims that women's oppression starts from families, workplace and the proximity by the workers to the means of production. It is the Socializing influence upon women that define their major role as mother housekeeper and child-rearer. This strand also looks at division of labour and argues that a capitalist mode of production is at the centre of women's marginalization (Thobejane, 2014; Ian, 2010).
- Radical feminism: Radical feminism looks a women from the vantage point of patriarchy. This ideology seeks to deconstruct all patriarchal relations in the world and usher in an egalitarian form of society (Thobejane, 2014).Radical feminism looks at the root cause of women's oppression in patriarchal gender relations; and women share common interest in freeing themselves from male oppression (Wills, 1984).

For the purpose of this study, African Feminism was employed as it closely relates with the experiences of women in Africa, and in institutions of higher learning in particular. Klein, (1983) indicates that it is significant to assume a perspective where women's experiences, ideas and needs are valid instead of using a male-based framework to make generalisations about the whole population or all human beings. Several feminists contend that dominant knowledge practices produce theories that represent women as inferior, deviant, or significant only in the ways they serve male interests (Alcoff *et al*, 1993; Alcoff, 2001).

African feminism includes the history of colonial rule and women's involvement in nationalist struggles. Women's movements in Africa reflect the traditions of organisations that have characterised spiritual and material life in Africa (New Dictionary of the History of Ideas, 2005). According to Ahikire (2014), African feminism is a political strategy that informs women's movement and practices on the continent, making it a very complex phenomenon to conceptualise. Many African thinkers have rejected the word "Feminism" considering it as an idea from the Western World, and sexually disrespecting women who pose a threat to traditional culture and society. Although many feminist thinkers extract the histories of women's movements in African societies, and argue that Western feminism has derived its inspiration from Africa.

The study highlighted the affected areas through African Feminist approach that contributes towards gender parity and understands the dynamics of gender mainstreaming in South African institutions of higher learning.

2.9 Conclusion

This chapter captured the reviewed literature on gender mainstreaming. It focused on the international and the African continent perspective of Gender mainstreaming and finally based it on the University of Venda, where the study itself was conducted. The theoretical framework employed in the study is the African Feminist thought. African Feminist theory challenges issues of gender inequality in all strata of life including institutions of higher learning in relation to gender mainstreaming. The concept of Gender and gender mainstreaming were addressed. Global and continental trends in gender mainstreaming were also discussed. The next chapter discusses the research methodology used in the study.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the research methodology that was used to answer the research questions that helped to achieve the objectives of the study. This chapter deals with mixed method research approach, that used qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques and analysis procedures, research design, instrumentation, sampling, ethical considerations and the demography of the study. Research methodology provides a description of the precise techniques, measuring instruments utilised and the precise sequence of activities carried out in making the measurement (De Vos, Fouche, and Schurink, 2011).

3.2 Research approach

In this study the researcher used mixed method approach through the use of qualitative or quantitative data collection. The study build on the strength of qualitative or quantitative data (Saunders, *et al*,2009). These mixed methods were used sequentially and did not combine each other. According to Saunders, *et al* (2009) a qualitative approach to research is focused on understanding a phenomenon from a closer perspective, whereas a quantitative approach tends to approximate phenomena from a larger number of individuals using survey methods. Qualitative research is primarily explanatory research and is used to gain an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations for a phenomenon (Saunders *et al*, 2009).

Qualitative research is useful in uncovering trends of thoughts and opinions by delving deeper into the problem. On the other hand, quantitative research is used to quantify a problem by way of generating numerical data or data that can be transformed into usable statistics and generalised results from a large population. Quantitative research essentially utilises measurable data to uncover patterns in research (Saunders, *et al*, 2009). Hence this study used both a quantitative and qualitative research approach.

The quantitative approach looked into the social experience through the use of an unstructured questionnaire (open and closed ended questionnaire). The respondents were UNIVEN staff members (women and men) who answered by choosing a predetermined set of scaled responses at the University of Venda. Quantitative approach captured measurable data via demographic information and statistics aspects using percentages. Quantitative data lets us derive important

meaning from research data, including differences of opinion between groups and demographics (Henning *et al.*, 2004).

A qualitative methodology, on the other hand, was used to collect data by way of interviews at the University of Venda. In the qualitative approach, few individuals were contacted as key informant respondents that understand the concept of gender mainstreaming (Mouton and Marais, 1990). Those that were interviewed were senior administrators, senior lectures, Directors, and HOD's that have over 15 years of experience and are conversant with gender mainstreaming dynamics at University of Venda. The advantages of utilizing qualitative research were as follows:

- It provided a deeper understanding into the study;
- The process was natural and real, it allowed the researcher to develop a more accurate understanding of the subject matter (Ben-Eliyahu, 2014); and
- Data obtained was based on human experience which is more compelling (Saunders *et.al*, 2009).

3.3 Research design

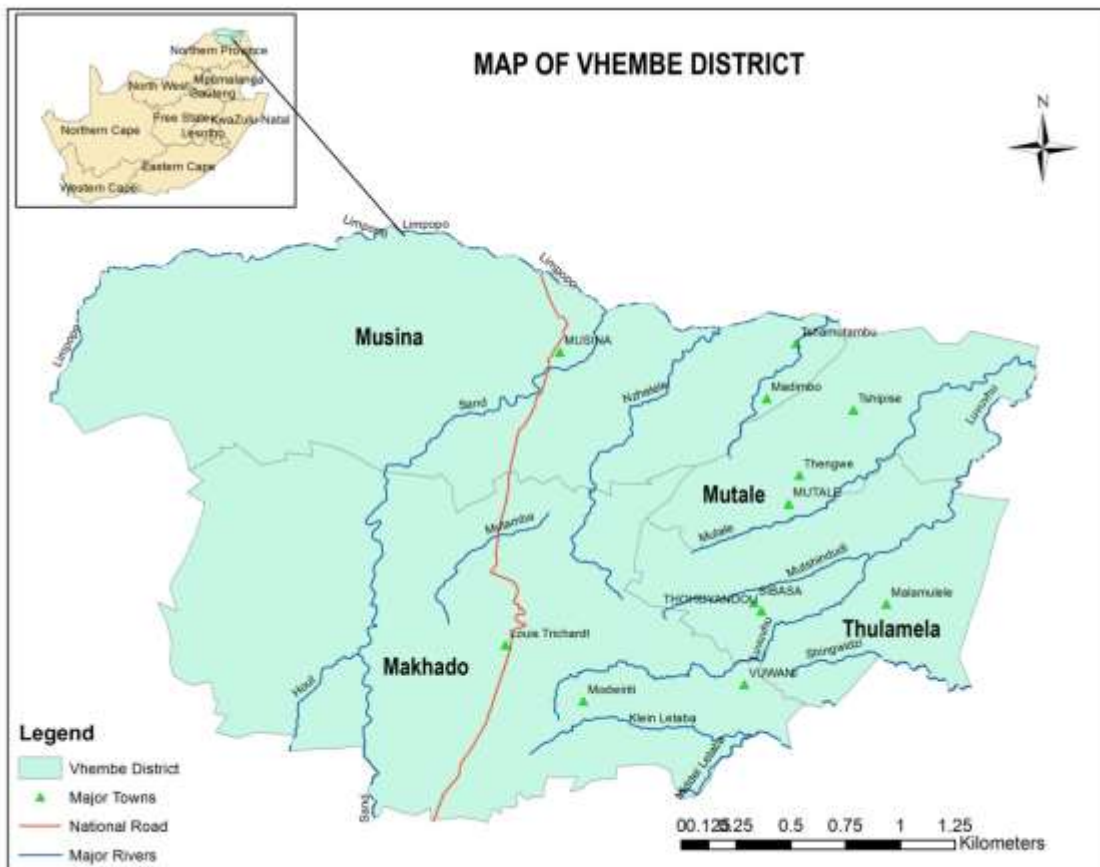
The mixed method approach were utilised for this study. However, the most common research strategy is the case study approach which describes the overall research that aims at identifying the causal links between variables that pertain to the study problem (Sim, *et al*, 2014). A case study pertains to a limited number of units of analysis (often on one), such as a group or institution being studied (Welman and Kruger, 2005). The advantages of a case study in this study were the in-depth data collected on a single case, also the evidence was grounded in the social setting being studied (the University of Venda). However, the case study method had the following disadvantages: The results could not be generalised to the entire higher institution of learning sector in Republic of South Africa because the study was undertaken at smaller scale. The study also analysed participants' attitudes, which are shaped by the same social relations being researched. In this process, the researcher removed himself from the research context to obtain a critical distance from which they can interrogate their own standpoint.

3.4 Description of the study area

This study was conducted at University of Venda located in Thohoyandou, Vhembe District, in Limpopo Province, South Africa. Vhembe District is located in the Northern Most Part of The

Limpopo Province. It shares borders with Zimbabwe and Botswana in The North-West and Mozambique in The South-East through the Kruger National Park. The Limpopo River Valley forms the border between the district and its international neighbors. It includes the Northern Province and areas that were previously under Venda and Gazankulu Bantustan's Administration (South African Census, 2011).

Figure: 3.1 below Map showing the study area, in Vhembe district:



Vhembe district, Limpopo Province

(Adapted from: www.municipalities.co.za)

3.5 Entry into the study area

Due to the fact that the study requires the participation of staff members (women and men) at UNIVEN, the researcher needed permission from the research office. To achieve this, the researcher completed the research form and submitted it to the institution's research office with

proposal copy attached. The research office then granted the researcher permission through an approval letter and an ethical clearance letter which enabled him to proceed with this study.

3.6 Population and Sample

Banerjee *et al* (2007) refers to the population of a study as the geographic location, age, sex, aggregate or total possible elements that confirm a set of specification that can be included in a study. The total population of staff members (Academic and Non-Academic) used for this study at University of Venda for 2016 Academic year is 840. Of the total population, (academic and non-academic staff) the researcher used a sample size of 84 from the total staff members (women and men). The Sampling size also was dependent on the logical relationship between sampling selection, research questions and objective of the study. The sample characteristics were relevant to the research question (s) Patton (2002). The rural university (University of Venda) was selected conveniently as a case study because of the researcher's observation as well as its geographic location of the institution in the rural area. The researcher's observation of the rural context of the institution enhanced the understanding of perceived gender disparities among staff members (women and men). These perceived gender disparities allowed in-depth exploration of gender inequality challenges, Gender mainstreaming structures and the implications of attitudes (staff members and management) on gender mainstreaming issues in a rural higher learning institution of this nature. The unit of data analysis consisted of staff members (women and men) at various level (academic and non-academic staff) particularly those that are conversant with gender mainstreaming issues: senior administrators, senior lecturers, Directors and HOD's in the University of Venda.

3.7 Sampling Techniques

The sampling technique used in this study was Purposive and stratified sampling. Purposive sampling was used to select nine (9) participants (senior administrators, senior lecturers, directors and HOD's) who were interviewed. According to Patton, (2002) rule of thumb should be used in determining the appropriate sample size for the qualitative aspect of the study. Hence, after the interview, of these nine participants, the sample size reached saturation. There were no new concepts or themes emerging in the study and I could not find more participants who were willing to participate in the study. They were chosen because of the deliberate nature of the study to identify respondents who could answer the questions competently (Singh, and Masuku, 2014). The respondents were selected with a bias towards balancing gender disparity and to motivate

responses from both sides of the genders. The study required an in-depth exploration of individuals' perceptions on gender mainstreaming issues from the staff members (women and men). In this case, only a small sample was used because it helped in a comprehensive data collection. According to Creswell (2016); Leedy & Ormrod (2005), it is easier to check the data of a small sample than a large population size. Since purposive sampling was used to collect qualitative data using the interview, Stratified sampling was used to collect quantitative data using the questionnaire (Saunders, *et al*, 2009).

The researcher used Stratified sampling to subdivide the population into subpopulation to represent the population size of the study. Stratified sampling was the most suitable because the respondents represent both academic and non-academic staff members at the University of Venda. This Stratified sampling approach ensured that none of the department is under-represented or over-represented. Respondents consisted of 75 participants (staff members) who were given the questionnaire to complete but 60 completed the questionnaire. The following are the groups that participated in the study: Deans, HOD, senior lecturer, lecturer, senior Admin staff, Admin staff and others. The sample of the population provided accurate understanding through the mixed method research approach. The researcher used small sampling size because of time, costs and effort of collecting data from a larger population.

3.8 Data collection

Primary data were collected from staff members (Women and Men) at the University of Venda through questionnaires and interviews. The questionnaire consisted of a combination of open and close ended questions in which respondents filled and handed over to the researcher. The questionnaire relates to biographic data of the respondents, their opinions about gender inequality challenges, Gender mainstreaming structures and the implications of attitudes of staff members and management on gender mainstreaming at the University of Venda. These questions helped the researcher to generate statistical descriptions using percentages and demographic information using quantitative approach. Open-ended questionnaires are more elaborate in responses which are unlimited in some cases.

The second aspect of primary data was the interview with key informant's staff members at the managerial position who have an understanding and are conversant with gender mainstreaming issues at the University of Venda. These interviews helped the researcher to generate themes and textual analysis of those interviewed.

Secondary data was collected through reading, analysing and understanding the relevant documented debates in gender mainstreaming within the institutions of higher learning such as books, journal articles, government documents, newspapers, magazines, UNIVEN Annual reports and policy document, as well as the international and South African documented experiences with regards to gender mainstreaming within institutions of higher learning in South Africa. The quantitative aspect of the study was divided into four sections of the questionnaire namely: Section A: demographic data of staff members (women and men) at University of Venda; Section B: Gender Inequality challenges, Section C: Promotion Criteria and Structure in The Institution and Section D: Attitude to Gender Mainstreaming (see Appendix 1). The information regarding the purpose of the study was clearly stated in the informed consent form (see Appendix 2). The respondents completed the consent papers, although few did not complete because they were afraid to disclose their identity despite the researcher's effort in assuring them that their identity will not be disclosed.

The qualitative interview was conducted on the available and willing staff members (women and men). The interview was divided into three parts: Section A: The interview began by the researcher first reading out aloud the purpose of carrying out the interview. Section B: Participants were asked to describe their Understanding of gender mainstreaming? And other probing questions that emerged. Section C: Participants were asked about their opinion if University of Venda management is doing well in terms of the strategy(s) used to achieve gender equity? And other probing question that emerged (see Appendix 4). The information regarding the purpose of the study was clearly stated in the informed concert form (see Appendix 3) and was also briefly explained orally. Before the interview commenced each of the participants were asked to sign the informed consent form. Efforts were made to respect the autonomy of the participants.

3.9 Data Analysis

In this study both primary and secondary data were used to analyse the responses of the participants. Data analysis is a process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data (De Vos *et al.*, 2011). Data collected was condensed, categorised and structured in order to derive meaning. Tables bar and pie charts were created to categorize the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Each category of data was clearly defined to ensure consistency in analysing and interpreting the results. The analysis adopted the qualitative and quantitative approach of data analysis. The qualitative approach involved themes and textual analysis and the quantitative approach involved demographic information and statistical

descriptions using percentages. The Quantitative data was captured, manoeuvred and classified using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. The SPSS outputs were carefully studied, interpreted and presented in relation to the research problem of the study. Statistical data enables us to derive important meanings from the research data, and demographics. Quantitative data were presented in the form of tables, bar and pie charts and analysed in percentages, whilst qualitative data was presented in themes and was analysed by thematic analysis.

3.10 Research Limitations

The researcher encountered challenges during the data collection at the University of Venda. Most of the staff members (women and men) were not willing to participate in the study. Some staff members collected the questionnaire but could not complete it because they were convinced that the study had something to do with them and the University of Venda despite the researcher's explanation about the purpose of the study. Some staff members do not understand the concept of gender mainstreaming and some were not willing to participate. So it became challenging for the researcher to find more participants in the data collection. Some of the staff members especially those at the managerial level referred me back to their subordinates or other staff members they think are less busy and could be willing to participate. These challenges hindered the researcher from getting back the 75 questionnaires which were distributed, instead the researcher managed to get back 60 filled and completed questionnaires.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

For the purpose of this research, the researcher was ultimately responsible for the integrity of the research process and the dignity and well-being of the research subjects. As such, the researcher recognised the need to balance subjectivities, provided accurate research accounts and act within the law in order to develop the required expertise. This was accomplished by:

3.11.1 Ensuring that permission is sought and granted

The proposal was presented to the School of Human and Social Sciences' Higher Degrees Committee prior to the execution of the research project and was approved before it was sent to the University Higher Degrees Committee and then to the University Research Office for ethical clearance. An approval letter and ethical clearance letter were issued. Copies of these documents are part of the appendix.

3.11.2 Getting Informed Consent

The concept of informed consent refers to the importance of informing participants about the nature of the research study. Participants of the study have a holistic understanding of the nature of the study and their full involvement in the research project, hence they gave consent to be part of the research project (Welman and Kruger, 2005). This includes time commitment, type of activity, topics covered and risks involved. Informed consent implied the following:

- Participants had the intellectual capacity and psychological maturity necessary to understand their involvement in the study.
- Participants were making an autonomous decision to participate in the study.
- Involvement in the study is absolutely voluntary.
- Participants were aware of the nature and details of the research being conducted.
- Participants were aware of their right to discontinue in the research study.

Participants were in no way coerced into participating in the study (Welman and Kruger, 2005). To this end, an informed consent letter was prepared and sent to each participant of the study (See appendix 2 & 3).

3.11.3 Ensuring Confidentiality and Anonymity

The study ensured that the identity of all participants was protected. Protection of confidentiality involved restricting access to raw data, storing all data securely, reporting findings in a manner that does not allow for ready identification of participants and obtaining permission for subsequent use of data. The information participants give is confidential and their names are not revealed in the analysis and interpretation of the data.

3.11.4 Securing Appointment to fill questionnaire and interview

An appointment to send the questionnaire and interview for data collection was arranged with the participants. The appointment was made at the convenience of the participants because of the nature of their duties. The questionnaires took less than 20 minutes to be completed and the interview took less than 35 minutes to be completed.

3.12 Conclusion

The chapter described the qualitative and quantitative research methodology adopted for this research. It deals with the research approach, research design, instrumentation, sampling, the ethical considerations of the study and the demography. A case study design was purposefully chosen to have in-depth data collected and the evidence grounded within the University of Venda. The next chapter discusses the Research presentation, findings and data interpretations.

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND DATA INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research findings from analyses of qualitative data collected through interviews and quantitative data collected using the questionnaires from respondents who are staff members at the University of Venda. Qualitative data were collected through interviews with nine (9) respondents whilst quantitative data were collected through Seventy-five (75) participants who were given questionnaires but sixty (60) filled and completed the questionnaires. The quantitative data were presented in tables, bar and pie charts and analysed using simple descriptive statistics in form of percentages whilst the qualitative data was presented in themes and analysed using thematic analysis. Quantitative data were presented in form of tables, bar and pie charts whilst qualitative data was presented in the thematic and narrative form. The discussion of findings from qualitative data was linked to the literature reviewed and the theoretical framework which underpinned the study.

4.2 Quantitative Data

A total of 75 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents. The response from questionnaires totalled 60, representing an impressive 80 percent response rate (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1 Response rate

Questionnaire distributed	Questionnaire returned	Response rate (%)
75	60	80

4.2.1 Demographic data

The age and gender distribution of the respondents showed that 48.3% of the respondents are males whiles 51.7% are females (Table 4.2). Majority of the respondents, 35% male and 33.3% female, respectively are between the ages of 30 and 49 years.

Table 4.2 Age and gender distribution of respondents

Age range (years)	Gender Distribution				Total	
	Male		Female			
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
18 - 29	2	3.3	7	11.7	9	15.0
30 - 40	16	26.7	10	16.6	26	43.3
41 – 49	5	8.3	10	16.7	15	25.0
≥ 50	6	10.0	4	6.7	10	16.7
Total	29	48.3	31	51.7	60	100.0

Table 4.3 shows the designation and gender distribution of the respondents. The only dean who participated in the study was a male whereas; all the 3 HODs are females. There were more males in the senior lecturer category (6.7%) and lecturer category (13.3%) than females. This shows that the majority of respondents are experienced and had rich information.

Table 4.3 Designation and gender distribution of respondents

Designation/Rank	Gender Distribution				Total	
	Male		Female			
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Dean	1	1.7	0	0.0	1	1.7
HOD	3	5.0	3	5.0	3	5.0
Senior Lecturer	4	6.7	2	3.3	6	10.0
Lecturer	8	13.3	6	10.0	14	23.3
Senior Administrative Staff	4	6.7	2	3.3	6	10.0
Administrative Staff	10	16.6	10	16.7	20	33.3
Others	2	3.3	8	13.4	10	16.7
Total	29	48.3	31	51.7	100	100.0

The socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents indicate that most (61.7%) of the respondents are new (they have spent 5 years or less) at the university (Table 4.4). Few (10%) of the respondents have been with the university for 21 years and above. Similarly, most (33.3%) of the respondents are administrative staff (Table 4.4).

Table 4.4 Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents

Characteristics	Number	Percentage
<i>Period of service at rural university</i> (n=60)		
0 - 5 years	37	61.7
6 - 10 years	9	15.0
11 - 15 years	3	5.0
16 - 20 years	5	8.3
≥ 21 years	6	10.0
<i>Designation/Rank</i> (n=60)		
Dean	1	1.7
HOD	3	5.0
Senior Lecturer	6	10.0
Lecturer	14	23.3
Senior Administrative Staff	6	10.0
Administrative staff	20	33.3
Others	10	16.7

Table 4.4 shows above shows the proportion of respondents who were able to correctly identify the gender of staff who are currently in a senior management position at the University of Venda. Overwhelmingly, males are currently occupying 6 (75%) of the senior management positions at the University of Venda. All those who responded (n=49; n=49; and n=48) were able to correctly identify the “male” gender for the current VC; DVC Academics; and Registrar, respectively.

However, 71.1% (n=45) and 80% (n=45) of those who responded to the question correctly identified “female” gender for the posts of Director of Finance and Librarian, respectively.

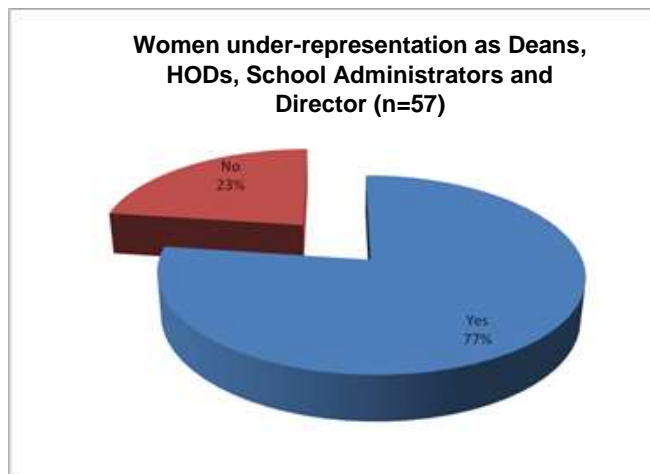
4.2.2 Gender inequality challenges

Table 4.5 Identification of gender of senior position holders

Characteristics	Gender	Number	Percentage
<i>Identification of gender of senior position holders</i>			
VC (n=49)	Male	49	100.0
DVC Academic (n=49)	Male	49	100.0
DVC Administration (n=45)	Male	42	93.3
Registrar (n=48)	Male	48	100.0
Deputy Registrar (n=44)	Male	43	97.7
Director of Finance (n=45)	Female	32	71.1
Deputy Director of Finance (n=33)	Male	24	72.7
Librarian (n=45)	Female	39	80.0

Regarding the question of whether women are under-represented in the positions of Deans, HODs, School Administrators and Directors, 77.2% (n=57) responded affirmatively (Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1 Women under-representation as Deans, HODs, School Administrators and Director



The above figure 4.1 represents a response of participants to the question of women being deans, HODs, School Administrators and Directors. The above statistics suggest that women are under-represented in the aforementioned positions.

Table 4.6. Respondent's perception of gender inequality challenges

Questions	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	NO	%	NO	%	NO	%	NO	%
Women are not willing to take up appointment at the University of Venda (n=59)	22	37.3	25	43.3	4	13.6.	25	13.6
Top management is not willing to appoint women to senior management position (n=58)	10	17.3	14	24.1	21	36.2	13	22.4
Discrimination against women prevent them from aspiring to higher positions at the University of Venda (n=59)	18	30.5	12	20.3	5	8.5.	24	40.7
Lack of adequate qualification(s) prevent women from attaining higher positions in University of Venda (n=59)	7	11.9	27	45.8	14	23.7	11	18.6
Patriarchal nature of South African society prevents women from attaining senior positions at the University of Venda (n=60)	16	26.7	25	41.7	13	21.6	6	10.0
Cultural barriers, beliefs and attitudes towards women impede their career progression (n=60)	17	28.3	22	36.7	17	28.3	4	6.7
It is challenging for women to influence decision making in a male dominated work place (n=60)	16	26.7	7	11.6	15	18	5	5.2
At the University of Venda, attitudes towards having women as managers and administrators are unfavourable (n=57)	6	10.5	23	40.4	21	36.8	7	12.3
Cultural perceptions of women's role and career opportunities influence their appointment into higher positions at University of Venda (n=59)	8	13.6	22	37.3	22	37.3	7	11.8
Lack of training and promotion for women prevent them from being properly represented in senior management positions at University of Venda (n=60)	16	26.7	8.13	13.3	16	9	15.0	27
Women usually direct their career goals towards occupations which are in line with social perceptions of female roles and they fail to aspire for challenging jobs (n=60)	6	10.0	21	35.0	24	40.0	9	15.0

Table 4.6 the table above shows the perceived gender inequality challenges of the respondents. The majority (68.4%;) of the respondents considered the patriarchal nature of the South African society as being a challenge to women who aspire to attain senior management positions at the University of Venda. 50.9% of the respondents perceived that cultural barriers, beliefs and attitudes towards women as impeding their carrier progression at the University of Venda. Most 38.3% of the respondents held the view that it is challenging for women to influence decision making in a male dominated work place. Further, 57.7% of the respondents considered lack of adequate qualifications as a challenge preventing women from attaining higher positions at the University of Venda. Another 50.8% of the respondents believed that discrimination of women prevent them from aspiring to higher positions. 55% disagree that it is the careers that women chose, that prevent them from aspiring to higher positions and challenging occupations. Almost 80.6% of respondents supported that women are not willing to take up appointment at the University of Venda.

4.2.3 Strategies to Achieve Gender Parity

The respondents were asked to indicate the strategies that the university has in place (from among the opinions provided) for female staff to have equal representation in senior management positions. 39% of the respondents selected “Gender equity” and 35% selected “Affirmative action”, respectively. This supports chapter 3 of the Employment Equity Act of 1998 which is dedicated to affirmative action and requires that all employers of labour must work towards achieving gender parity. Close to 17% chose role models as being influential in choosing a career while 18% chose sensitization to the career chosen (Figure 4.2). When asked to tick factors hindering the implementation of gender policy (from the options provided) at the University of Venda, 31% selected “Lack of top management commitment” and 30% chose “Stereotyping”, respectively. Similarly, 17 and 14 respondents chose “Lack of role models” and “Lack of sensitization”, respectively (Figure 4.3).

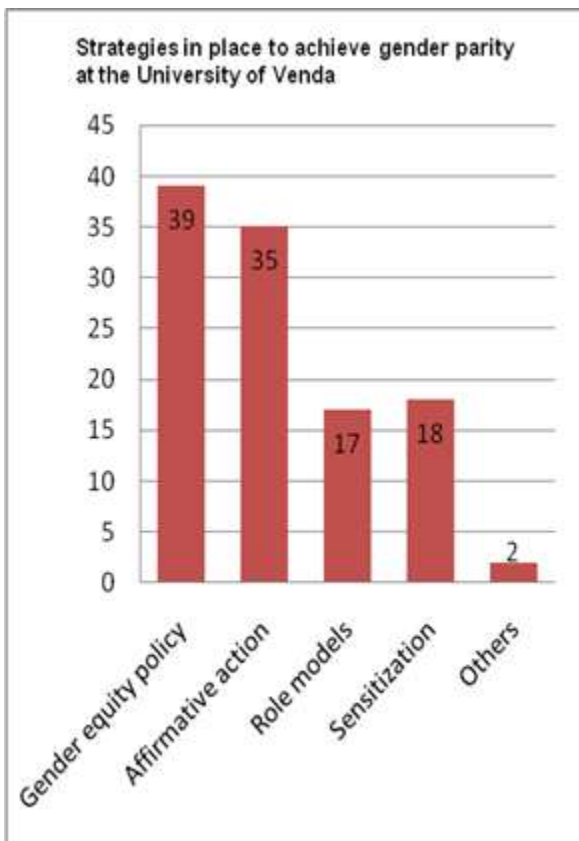


Figure 4.2. Strategies to achieve gender parity

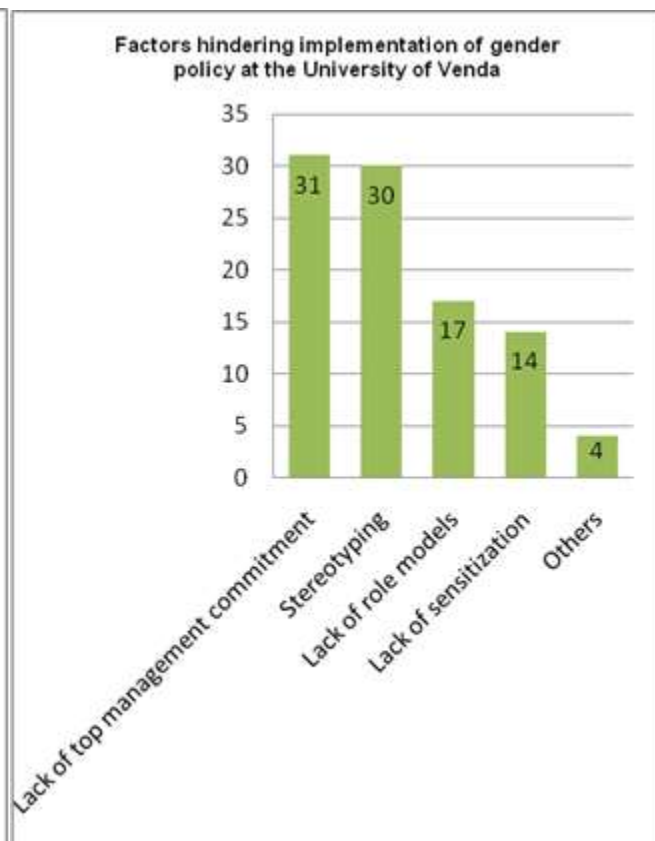


Figure 4.3. Factors hindering implementation of gender policy

4.2.4 Attitude to gender mainstreaming

“The respondents were asked questions about their attitude towards gender mainstreaming. Their responses are summarised in Table 4.7 below. Of the 60 respondents who returned questionnaires, the majority of them responded to all the six questions about their attitude towards gender mainstreaming. However, a few answered part of the questions. The majority (67%) of the respondents strongly agree that Gender mainstreaming is necessary at the university, a minority of 2% strongly disagrees whilst 5% did not comment. On the question of whether there is no stereotyping in the management positions occupied by females in the University of Venda, about 42% (27+15) disagrees. 84% are positive that women should be encouraged to aspire to higher positions at the University of Venda.

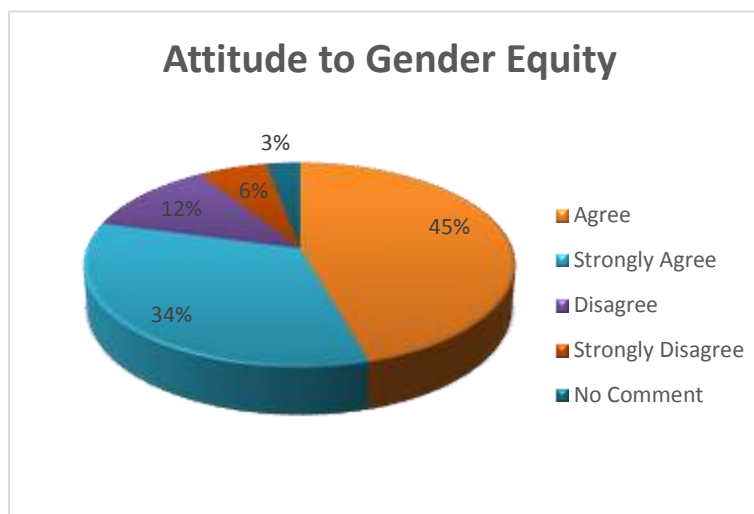
Table 4.7 Attitude to gender mainstreaming

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Comment
	%	%	%	%	%
Gender equality is necessary (n=60)	67%	27%	0%	2%	5%
There is need for gender mainstreaming at the University of Venda (n=60)	50%	37%	10%	3%	0%
There is no stereotyping in the management positions occupied by females in University of Venda (n=60)	13%	40%	27%	15%	5%
Females should be encouraged to aspire to higher positions in University of Venda (n=60)	62%	32%	2%	5%	0%
There should be equal representation of female and male gender in higher positions in University of Venda (n=60)	57%	30%	10%	3%	0%
Gender equality has brought positive change to University of Venda (n=60)	27%	37%	22%	10%	5%
Average	46%	34%	12%	6%	3%

4.2.5. Responses on Attitude towards Gender Mainstreaming

The overall responses on all the six questions on the attitude of respondents towards gender mainstreaming are illustrated in Figure 4.4 below. 45% of respondents, on overall, agree with the questions on attitude towards gender mainstreaming, 34% strongly agree, 12% disagree, 6% strongly disagree whilst only 3% did not give a comment on at least one of the six questions.

Figure 4.4 Attitudes to gender Equity



4.2.6. Attitude of Respondents towards Gender Mainstreaming

An analysis of overall attitude of respondents towards gender mainstreaming is summarised in Figure 4.5 below. Those who agree and strongly agree to constitute the total (80%) of those with a positive attitude. 18% (those who disagree and strongly disagree) make up the total of those with a negative attitude. An overall of 3% of respondents who returned questionnaires did not complete all the six questions about the attitude towards gender mainstreaming. In conclusion, there is a strong positive attitude of respondents towards gender mainstreaming at the University of Venda.

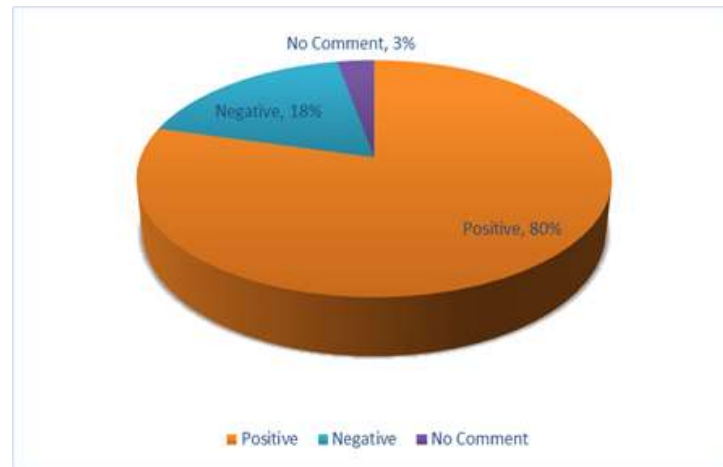


Figure 4.5 Attitudes of respondents towards gender mainstreaming

DATA ON THE INTERVIEWED PARTICIPANTS

4.2.7. Qualitative Data

Data was also collected from respondents consisting of 9 participants through unstructured interview (Heads of Departments and Managers). These are both male and female employees of the University of Venda. The questions asked during the interview were allied to the objective of the study. The interview questions looked at gender mainstreaming challenges and promotion criteria and structure. Other broader issues and questions emerged (see interview guide Appendix 4), and staff attitude and management to gender mainstreaming were observed. The interview had a positive outcome, although some respondents were not aware of some issues which were asked during the interview. The responses of the interviews were analysed and interpreted by contrasting them in thematic and narrative form. The outline below shows themes that emerged during the analysis:

4.2.7.1. Meaning of Gender Mainstreaming

The concept of gender mainstreaming has a broader meaning encompassing a very wide concept and understanding. This necessitated the question on the meaning of gender mainstreaming; because it meant that participants could respond to issues on Gender Mainstreaming to enrich the study. Some of the explanations given were; *Women were marginalized and disadvantaged in the past in South Africa and now it is about time they reclaimed their position in society*". (Interviewee 2) This supports the report from United Nation which states that women are not recognised, rather

they are adversely marginalized and underrepresented in all fields of human endeavours (United Nation Women, 2014). Interviewee 3 said the following: *Trying to strike a balance between the numbers of men compared to women in positions of power leaves so much to be desired.* More so, Research emphasised the importance of mainstreaming gender in various institutions, referencing the history of colonial rule and women involvement in nationalist struggles (New Dictionary of the History of Ideas, 2005).

4.2.7.2. Experience of Gender Mainstreaming

In as far as staff members' experience of Gender Mainstreaming was concerned, it emerged that most men occupy senior positions. Gender equality does not exist although there is an equity policy which, according to the opinion of the majority, is just on paper. On this note, some participants said the following: *There are many women who occupy lower positions as opposed to men who hold strategic positions on campus. On the senior management level there are more men than women.* (Interviewee 4). In African feminism point of view, women perceive their men as partners and to exclude men from women issues is unreasonable as well as to exclude women from men issues should be unthinkable. To support this, one of the respondent briefed that *there is an equity policy which is supposed to govern the University in terms of access to positions of employment for people who were being disadvantaged. But it is hardly implemented.* This support Chapter 3 of South African Employment Equity Act of 1998 which is dedicated to affirmative action and requires all employers, including institutions of higher learning to work towards achieving employment equity including those who were disadvantage. Klein (1983) emphasized that it is significant to assume a perspective where women's experiences are valid instead of using a male-based framework to make generalisations about the whole institution. However, the cry for gender balance is not satisfactory in the gender equity profiles of South African Universities. *Most of the time translating policy into reality is a big problem. There seems to be more emphasis on gender parity when it comes to positions. But this is not equally true about lower to medium positions which are meant for everybody* (Interviewee 5). It also support Part of the South African Employment Equity Act that requires all institutions to ensure that the necessary human and financial resources for gender mainstreaming are mobilised for capacity building and programme implementation.

4.2.7.3. Gender mainstreaming is fair to some and unfair to others

On whether Gender Mainstreaming was fair or not, it emerged that it was not fair at all. Some of the responses were; *I do not really think it is fair* (Interviewee 5). *At the lower level it is fair but at a*

higher level it is not (Interviewee 8). Another respondent said the following: *I have been to interviews, I have been to many meetings on issues of gender mainstreaming and what transpired was not encouraging.* This correlates with Nyarko and Eshun (2013), who posited that women who represented about 50% of the world's total population did not have a fair share of the available resources and access to opportunities. According to Alcoff (2001), several feminists contend that dominant knowledge practices represent women as inferior, only significant in the ways they serve male interests. It collaborates with the responses of one of the interviewee who said the following: *Women seem to internalize their victimhood as a God-given situation.* In some interviews, women could not perform well even though some are over qualified (Interview 2). Another respondent said those women who qualify apply but they fail to get top positions (Interview 6).

4.2.7.4 Knowledge on the existence of the gender policy on campus

Regarding the above theme, one respondent said, *I am not sure of any but if it is present, I think it is involved mostly during recruitment because there is always a representative who argues on behalf of gender equality and equity on campus* (Interviewee 6). *There is a policy that we must have 50-50 parity but sometimes it's not reachable.* According to Lombardo, (2013) gender mainstreaming requires all public policies to counter gender bias, reorganise policy structures and gender perspective. *Let me give an example. We wanted drivers and we said ladies are allowed to apply but only to find out that women drivers were not shortlisted at all.*

4.2.7.5. Low participation of women in meetings and managerial positions

Some of the factors leading to a lower participation of women in senior management positions include Lack of confidence and fear of cultural prejudices that say you may not be able to stand against men in the boardroom. It requires a lot of character and strength to do so. Eboiyehi, *et al* (2016) argue that in Nigeria gender equity gap and women's low participation in University management is attributed to patriarchal traditions. *You can see that basically, women are not even applying because at UNIVEN when you contest for higher positions you must have transcended the misogyny and patriarchy and it really needs a very strong character* (Interviewee 3) Morley, (2013) supports that women participation in educational management and decision making is very important in achieving equity.

4.2.7.6. On Gender equity

Interviewee number 1 stated that gender equity can be achieved in a number of ways. These include inter alia, having interview committees who search for those women with potential, taking women to workshops, having internal advertisements in departments, indicating in the advertisement that women will be considered for the post. Women should also be head-hunted to fill up certain posts. *The Council should know about the disparities happening at the university.* According to Ahikire (2014), women should share equally in society's opportunities and scarce resources that are meant for the communities.

Adebayo & Akanle, (2014) further indicate that the Millennium declaration recognises and supports the equal rights and opportunities for both women and men. Hence both genders should be engaged in all endeavours to bring gender equity in institutions of higher learning. Interviewee 2 said that *campaigns for women's' emancipation as well as training for both sexes should be given a priority.* Some of the responses from the participants (3 and 4) were that *"the only way to bring about gender equity is to indicate that this post is solely looking for this kind of gender (preferably a woman).* This might be interpreted as reverse gender discrimination. However, for us to balance the equation, we have to come up with solution that is proactive in solving the problem. If it is clearly stated I can feel confident, but if not like that you are not sure. Interviewee 4 indicated that in departments or in any level where we find that the majority are men, when it comes to adverts or interviews, *it should be indicated that preference is given to women.* Interviewee 5 and 6 were of the opinion that *"When we go to interviews, the Interview Committee should be told that in their department there are more men so what we want is a woman".* *The university should also take people to workshops and training. Also advertise internally if there are positions in the department.* This confirms part of the Employment Equity Act which requires that institutions of higher institutions should provide skills and development for affirmative action for employees to enable them to perform well in their positions.

Interviewee 6,7,8 and 9 opined that a lot of training women needs to be done. Another thing is that of communication. There is an equity policy. We also have an equity forum where we sit trying to get women to be recruited. It is very clear to say we need to give women Chance to apply for strategic positions.

4.2.7.7. Working strategies at UNIVEN to address gender disparities

Strategies working so far at UNVEN are increase women participation in senior positions included short- listing, the point system, sensitization, awareness's, and symposiums. Responses include the following: *Sensitizing is working to an extent that we are questioning the recruitment.* (Interview 5) *We had something, some sort of training on women leadership but it seems to have died. I think it can continue to empower more women.* (Interviewee 9). Research confirms the above sentiment that in some institutions where there are no formal gender-responsive strategies for recruitment and training, the tendency to hire males is greater thereby resulting in gender disparities (FAWE, 2013).

4.2.7.8. Clear promotion criterion at UNIVEN

There is a clear promotion criterion at UNIVEN but there is not much done to promote many women. To support the above sentiments, below were some of the responses: *“Not doing much. A word which comes to my mind now is that there will be nothing wrong if the university were to say let us have a moratorium in terms of promotion for women. That is when you are saying we want to equalize* (Interviewee 9). Maürtin-Cairncross, (2014) clearly indicates that knowledge is not gender specific. Anybody, regardless of their gender can reach their desired dreams. It is only the system of patriarchy that perpetuated gender stratifications in the world. *“Women are not studying as men are. When it comes to promotions or when promotions are there, the problem is of progression because men progress more. Even some women do not support themselves when it comes to promotion.”* (Interviewee4 and 3).

4.2.7.9. Assistance for women

There are measures designed to assist women to participate in managerial positions at UNIVEN. There is an initiative by the Vice Chancellor where he raised money for training staff and women in particular on university management and leadership (Interviewee 2). The Top–down approach on insisting that women should be mainstreamed is needed if we want UNIVEN to create a 50/50 gender parity. This is in support of Pasque and Nicholson, (2011) who posit that feminist theories aim to understand women's oppression and how to overcome their obstacles in life. If top management insist on gender mainstreaming, all will follow'. We have just appointed a new Deputy Vice Chancellor. If you look at the applicants, women were there but they did not win (Interviewee 9).

4.2.7.10. The role played by Gender in promotion criteria

Gender plays a role in promotion criteria as shown by responses to this question: All the respondents indicated that it has a role to play. *The family structure has both men and women. Even at the university we have both genders well represented. There are issues that affect women in particular and those which affect female students in particular (interviewee 2).* This means that all genders are essential in getting the University to work (Interviewee 3 and 4).

However, there are those who did not see gender as essential. Rather they saw everyone as important (Interviewee 6 and 7). Only a few universities in Africa implement gender policies and regulations in their administrative structures and academic programmes. In African feminism perspective, men and women are a mutually progressive gender that is capable of transforming institution were non-patriarchy exist. However, both African feminists have responsibility to strive for equal societies rather than wishing. However, Interviewee 8 and 9 stated that *patriarchal discrimination is a historical fact and it will take a deliberate action to redress the marginalised gender.*

4.2.7.11. The challenges of gender mainstreaming

Some of the factors hindering women's participation in senior management positions include cultural beliefs, responsibilities women have at home, the Pull Him Down (PHD) syndrome, and the fact that others do not want their counterparts to take up these positions. Some of the words of the interviewees were: "Lack of confidence and fear of cultural prejudices that says you may not be able to stand against men in the boardroom. It requires a lot of character and strength to do so. Basically, women do not even apply because; it requires boldness to go against the belief system characterized by patriarchy. Eboiyehi *et al*, (2016) argued that it is not surprising that there are gender equity gaps in most university management positions in Africa which are linked to pre-colonial patriarchal arrangements whereby boys were equipped with occupational skills and girls were equipped with reproductive functions. Many of the able women are afraid of being classified as "Tom Boys" and effeminate when they apply for such positions (Interviewee 3). *In my view they have a huge responsibility of taking care of children and attending to house chores rather than chasing lucrative positions. For example knocking off late at work will also create problems at home for our female colleagues.* (Interviewee 2)

4.2.7.12. Gender and Promotion

Men and women are given equal opportunities regarding promotion. This statement is supported by the following views from the participants: It is indeed true that the University is offering opportunities to all regardless of gender. The *qualifications of individuals are more important* (Interviewee 4). *The platform is there. If you qualify for the position then you are fine.* (Interviewee 9) .*There is no segregation when it comes to that* (Interviewee 3). This is in support of Maürtin-Cairncross, (2014) who argued that men and women are equally capable of assuming positions of senior management. He further argues that discriminatory promotion practices will result in gender imbalances and impact on women negatively. *There is some kind of subjectivity when it comes to promotion* (Interviewee 4). *I can see both men and women being recruited only that it is not taking place in the manner in which it is expected. The only challenge is that a lot of women would prefer to work closer to their homes to take care of their children. This poses a challenge* (Interviewee 2).

4.2.7.13 Implementation of Gender mainstreaming policy

Interviewee 3 indicated that It is feasible to implement gender mainstreaming policy. For instance myself I have one post which is very difficult to fill. This is a post for a chief laboratory technician. I do not get applicants from female candidates. Interviewee 1 also indicated that It is feasible to implement Gender Mainstreaming generally and even at UNIVEN. There were however various responses to this assertion as mentioned below. Yes, there are some industries that have done so. The fact that we are talking about a female President, you know it actually means it is possible and we are going in the right direction. In Liberia, we have a female President. It is feasible. At UNIVEN it is possible to have a female Chancellor but you must have a formula right, you must have equity plan, strategy and you must have those targets. It is possible. In fact, in the Housing Department, we make it a point that there are three female and three males for every position created. It's a very simple department but it is exemplary in that sense (Interviewee 5). This confirm that UNIVEN abide by SADC Gender Protocol policy that require all Directorates and Sectors in the Member States to integrate gender issues into their business plans as integral part of their work including employment; the challenge at UNIVEN is translating completely what is on paper into action. More so, Maürtin-Cairncross, (2014) argued that absence of gender mainstreaming policies and regulations will hinder women and result in gender disparities in higher institution. On the effectiveness of the policy it emerged that it was effective to some while not to others. Some of the responses were; we are implementing it. I can give you an example. We wanted 10 drivers and we said we can reserve 6 for women but no one came. There was

shortage of women drivers (Interview 4) they are trying to implement it even Though I have not seen the document (Interview 6).

4.2.7.14 Attitudes towards Gender Mainstreaming

The attitude in most cases is influenced by culture and Patriarchy. If Patriarchal nature and backgrounds do not allow women to be represented within the institutional structures, especially at decision-making.

There is no segregation when it comes to that. However, a lot of female workers resort to keeping quiet instead of vocalizing their frustrations. They still have that mentality that there are certain issues that are meant for men (Interviewee 4). Culture is the main stumbling block. We are Africans, we know how our societal structure is regarding women (Interviewee 5). Women have bigger responsibilities at home (Interview 2). Patriarchal structures are still part of the society (Interview 7). Almost all the respondents pointed out that culture and patriarchy have a negative effect in the realization of Gender mainstreaming. This is supported by Panigrahi, (2013) who argued that traditional and patriarchal African societies recognised men's role as leaders in the business world. Thobejane, (2014) affirmed that patriarchal ideologies justify discrimination between sexes and the oppression of women. Most institutions of higher learning privilege men at the expense of women.

Most of the time issues raised by women are defeated because generally, they do not want to speak in meetings. At the end of the day, some of the decisions are not favourable to women and they complain (Interviewee 4). Issues that are raised by women are defeated because women do not want to talk at the meeting (Interviewee 2). Men still have that tendency that women cannot lead. They still have that mentality that they think there are some things women cannot do (Interviewee 4).

There is a positive relationship between personal attitude and understanding of gender mainstreaming. *Women are not well represented in top management at the moment*, (Interviewee 6). Senior management is still represented by men. *That is why it is called the boy's club's. It might be difficult for a female to feel at home there* (interviewee 1). This is correlated by Kronsell and Svedberg (2012), who opined that hegemonic masculinity gives men access to power and privilege over women; this hegemonic masculinity is one of the issues that needs to be tackled when addressing structures of organisations in gender mainstreaming. *At the senior management committee, more than 90% are men and departmental heads are mostly men* (Interviewee 2).

This imbalance support Moloi *et al*, (2014), who indicates that attitudes and patriarchal practices continues to hinder women’s freedom despite the South African constitution which preaches equality. Whilst few had a negative attitude towards gender mainstreaming at the University of Venda, the majority are of the opinion that this should be hastened. “The Challenge is women themselves don’t support each other” (interviewee 9).

4.2.7.15 Conclusion

This chapter presented, analysed and discussed the data collected from the participants who comprised of staff members at the University of Venda. The discussions were supported by the reviewed literature and the theoretical framework.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This study was “an exploration of gender mainstreaming in institutions of higher learning: the case of a rural university in Limpopo province, South Africa”. The study employed African feminist theories to get to the core of gender discrimination and what makes patriarchy to thrive. Purposive sampling was used to select 9 participants who were interviewed and convenience sampling was used to select a sample of 75 participants who were given questionnaires at the University of Venda but 60 completed the questionnaire. This chapter gives the conclusion and recommendations based on findings in relation to gender inequality, promotion criteria, attitudes on gender and gender mainstreaming policies.

5.2 Conclusions

Findings of the study led to a number of conclusions which are presented in this chapter. The majority of the respondents are new in the university. However, men are currently occupying the larger share of the senior management positions in the University of Venda. Women are under-represented in the senior management positions of Deans, HODs, School Administrators and Directors. The South African society is responsible for preventing women from attaining senior management positions at the University of Venda. This is in line with the patriarchal view stated by Thobejane, (2013) who indicates that patriarchy still informs our day to day deliberations.

The university has strategies in place for female staff to have equal representation in senior management positions, for example, Gender equity” and “Affirmative action”. Factors hindering the implementation of gender policy include lack of top management commitment, stereotyping, lack of role models and lack of sensitization (University of Venda policy on Gender mainstreaming, 2010). Staff members at the university were experiencing gender mainstreaming, but, Gender mainstreaming is not equally accepted and understood at the institution. UNIVEN gender policy is effective. There are strategies working at UNIVEN to address gender disparities. There is a clear promotion criterion at UNIVEN. Men and women are given equal promotion opportunities. There seem to be a disagreement on measures designed to assist women to participate in managerial positions at UNIVEN. The overall attitude of respondents towards gender mainstreaming is favourable. Both men and women are given equal opportunity to participate in decision making.

5.3 Recommendations

Gender issues are topical across the world and tertiary institutions are not an exception. Based on the study findings and conclusions, recommendations are suggested as follows:

Gender policy documents should be accessed by every member of the university at any given time. If needs be, every office at the University should practice gender mainstreaming to allow for a 50/50 parity to prevail. There should be more gender awareness activities such as workshops, conferences, and symposia so that staff members have an understanding of issues relating to gender mainstreaming. The study shows that, although there are workshops, conferences and symposia, the University should do more in terms of embracing gender mainstreaming policies on campus. Institutions like UNIVEN should recognise the efforts of women in striving for a more inclusive environment. Staff members should be encouraged to read and understand gender policies. It has been noted that very few members are keen to understand gender policies. Lack of knowledge on gender problems, results in a sustainable struggle of understanding gender policies and how they are implemented. The university management is encouraged to implement UNIVEN policies and SADC Gender protocols. Failure to implement these policies will be a disadvantage. To avoid gender disparities and female marginalisation, it requires the dedication of management and other stakeholders in the process of mainstreaming gender. There should be a dedicated gender mainstreaming unit at the University of Venda, and indeed all universities, to ensure that policy makers are engaged in the formulation and implementation of effective action plans for women empowerment and gender equality. A variety of strategies should be employed to sensitize people in order to increase the participation of women in higher managerial positions.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Research Questionnaire

The researcher is a student in University of Venda, Masters in Gender Studies (MGS) carrying out a research titled: “

An Exploration Of Gender Mainstreaming In Institutions Of Higher Learning: The Case Of A Rural University In Limpopo Province, South Africa”. You are kindly requested to assist in the study by responding to the questions. Your responses are going to be kept confidential.

INSTRUCTIONS

- ✓ Tick the appropriate box
- ✓ Fill in the blank spaces
- ✓ **SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA**

Question 1: Gender

Male	

Question 2: Age range

30 -40 years	
41 - 49 years	
Over 50 years	

Question 3: Highest qualification

National Diploma	
Higher National Diploma	
Bachelors/First Degree	
MBA/Other Masters Degree	
PhD	
Professor	

Question 4: Period of service at rural University (UNIVEN)

0 - 5 years	6 - 10 years	11 - 15 years	16 - 20 years	21 years and above

Question 5: Designation/Rank

VC	DVC	Dean	HOD	Senior Lecturer	Lecturer	Senior Administrative Staff	Administrative Staff	Others (Specify)

SECTION B: GENDER INEQUALITY CHALLENGES

Please tick in the appropriate box (Male or Female)

Question 6: The following position is currently held at University of Venda by:

	Male	Female
VC		
DVC Academic		
DVC Admin		
Registrar		
Deputy Registrar		
Director of Finance		
Deputy Director of Finance		
Librarian		
Others (Specify)		

Question 7: Are women under-represented in the above listed below?

YES NO

- a) Deans
- b) HODs
- c) School Administrators
- d) Directors

If your response to question 7 is "YES", what do you think is responsible for low participation of women in senior management positions in University of Venda?.....
.....

.....
.....

Question 8: what factors are responsible for women under-representation in senior management positions in University of Venda? Please, express yourself freely by giving as many reasons as you can.

.....
.....

The following statements require that you tick (√) from any of the four responses: Strongly agree, Agree, Disagree, and strongly disagree.

S/N	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
9	Women are not willing to take up appointment at the University of Venda				
10	Top management is not willing to appoint women to senior management position				
11	Discrimination against women prevent them from aspiring to higher positions at the University of Venda				
12	Lack of adequate qualification(s) prevent women from attaining higher positions in University of Venda				
13	Patriarchal nature of South African society prevent women from attaining senior positions at the University of Venda				
14	Cultural barriers, beliefs and attitudes towards women impede their career progression				
15	It is challenging for women to influence decision making in a male dominated work				

	place				
16	At the University of Venda, attitudes towards having women as managers and administrators are unfavorable				
17	Cultural perceptions of women's role and career opportunities influence their appointment into higher positions at University of Venda				
18	Lack of training and promotion for women prevent them from being properly represented in senior management positions at University of Venda				
19	Women usually direct their career goals towards occupations which are in line with social perceptions of female roles and they fail to aspire for challenging jobs				

SECTION C: PROMOTION CRITERIA AND STRUCTURE IN THE INSTITUTION

Question 20: Is gender equity being practiced in University of Venda?

YES NO

If NO, give reason (s)

.....
.....

Question 21: Is there a gender equity/mainstreaming policy at the institution?

YES NO

If NO, give reason (s)

.....

 Question 22: Are male and female staff given equal opportunities in employment?

YES NO

If NO, give reason (s)

.....

Question 23: What strategy(s) does the university have in place for females to have equal representation at senior management positions in the University of Venda? (Tick as many as applicable).

Gender equity policy	
Affirmative action	
Role models	
Sensitization	
Other (s) (Specify)	

Question 24: What factors are hindering implementation of gender policy in the University of Venda? (Tick as many as applicable).

Lack of Top management commitment	
Stereotyping	
Lack of role models	
Lack of sensitization	
Other (s) (Specify)	

Question 25: Are there staff development programmes for women in the University of Venda?

YES NO

If YES, state the staff development programmes

.....

.....

Question 26: Are promotion criteria being influenced by gender in the University of Venda?

YES NO

If YES, give reason (s)

.....

SECTION D: ATTITUDE TO GENDER EQUITY/MAINSTREAMING

The following statements require that you tick (✓) from any of the four responses: Strongly agree, Agree, Disagree, and strongly disagree.

S/N	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
27	Gender equality is necessary				
28	There is need for gender mainstreaming in the University of Venda				
29	There is no stereotyping in the management positions occupied by females in University of Venda				
30	Females should be encouraged to aspire to higher positions in University of Venda				
31	There should be equal representation of female and male gender in higher positions in University of Venda				
32	Gender equality has brought positive change to University of Venda				

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

Appendix 2: Informed Consent Form

Dear Participant, You are kindly invited to take part in the study titled “ An Exploration Of Gender Mainstreaming In Institutions Of Higher Learning: The Case Of A Rural University In Limpopo Province, South Africa”

The purpose of this study is to analyse gender mainstreaming of staff members at the University of Venda in Limpopo Province, South Africa.

Participation to this this study is voluntary, and you can at your own wish decline to participate. A questionnaire consisting of Open-ended and close-ended questions will be given for the purpose of data collection and analysis. The questionnaire will take 10 to 15 minutes of your time. Data collected in the questionnaire will mainly be used for the purpose of the study and therefore anonymity of the whole process is guaranteed. Your cooperation will be appreciated. Thank you in advance.

Yours Faithfully,

Barnabas Okere C.

I, understand the purpose of the study and the procedures involved. I understand that my participation in the study is voluntary and I can withdraw anytime I want without prejudice or victimization. I understand that my name will not appear on the questionnaire and it will not be used in the final report. Any information I reveal to the researcher will be treated with confidentiality. I agree to take part in the study, by answering questions contained in the questionnaire.

Signature

Date

Appendix 3: Interview Consent Form /Participant Information

Introduction

My name is Barnabas Okere C. I am currently conducting my Master's degree thesis in the School of Human and Social Sciences, Department of Gender Studies, University of Venda. Gender inequalities still exist in many organisations around the world and institutions of higher learning are no exception and data on mainstreaming efforts targeting women is either limited or non-existent. This research will add to the existing literature on gender mainstreaming and gender equality application in institutions of higher learning. The findings will help provide an insight on how to mainstream gender during the process of appointment and promoting staff to major management positions in public institutions.

Purpose of the study

You are being asked to participate in a research study on Gender Mainstreaming: The Case of a rural University in Limpopo Province, South Africa. The purpose of this study is to analyze gender mainstreaming of academic and management staff members at the University of Venda. You have been selected to participate in this study because of your position in the university.

Procedures and Duration

If you decide to participate in this study, you will be engaged in an in-depth interview on issues relating to gender mainstreaming. The discussion shall be audio taped and it may take between 20 to 35 minutes to complete. You are free to ask for clarification on any questions that you do not understand at any point or during the discussion. If you have questions about the study, you may ask at any time.

Risks and Discomforts

Some of the questions that will be asked are of a personal nature and so you may feel embarrassed to respond to them. The answers you will provide will be kept private and confidential. In a situation that you feel very uncomfortable about any question, you will be free to decline answering any question(s) that you do not want to answer.

Benefits and / or Compensation

There are no direct benefits/compensation that will come from participating in this study. The results will benefit the institution stakeholders to align with gender parity protocol of South African.

Alternative Procedure or Treatments

There are no interventions or treatments that will be done in this study.

Confidentiality

If you indicate your willingness to participate in this study, your participation will be on a voluntary basis. You are free to withdraw from the study at any point. Information collected about you and your responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality. The interview guide to be used during the interview will be identified by a coded number and a pseudonym shall be used instead of your name. This consent form will be separated from the coded interview guide and stored in a secure place.

Additional Costs

You will not incur any expenses from participating in this study.

Offer to Answer Questions

If you have any questions on any aspects that are not clear to you about this study, please feel free to ask me before you sign this form. You are free to take as much time as you can to think about it.

Authorization

By signing this form, it means that you have read and understood the information provided above, had all your questions answered, and decided to participate voluntarily without being coerced. You authorize me, field and academic supervisors

to access the information that you will have provided. The information you provide will only be used for the purpose of this study.

Signature of Respondent..... Date.....

Signature of Researcher..... Date.....

For any further information pertaining to this study, please feel free to contact me at:

Okere B.C.

Cell: +277 82475633

E-mail: banafirst1@gmail.com

YOU WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS CONSENT FORM TO KEEP

If you have any questions concerning this study or participant information/consent form beyond those answered by the investigator, including questions about the research, your rights as a research subject or research-related injuries: or if you feel that you have been treated unfairly and would like to talk to someone other than a member of the research team, please feel free to contact:

RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Research Office, University of Venda

Thank you.

Appendix 4: Interview Guide

SECTION A: PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This interview is about the study I am carrying out to examine gender mainstreaming at university of Venda. Your responses to these questions will enable me write a report on this topic. I assure you that all information given will be treated with utmost confidence and will be used solely for this academic purpose. The interview will not take much of your time but I need your total cooperation. I will seek your permission to use audio recording so as to make the discussion faster. This will ensure that I do not miss out important issues during the interview.

Section B: Gender mainstreaming Challenges

1) Can you describe your Understanding of gender mainstreaming?

2) What is your experience regarding gender mainstreaming at the University of Venda?

Probes

- Number of men and women being hired generally
- Number of men and women being hired as Senior Managers
- Number of men and women being hired as Middle Managers
- Number of men and women being hired as Lower level Managers

3) In your own opinion do you think, Gender mainstreaming, is fair in UNIVEN

Probes

- In general
- In univen
- Please explain your reason(s)

4) Please could you describe your understanding of gender mainstreaming policy in UNIVEN

Probe

- How effective is the implementation of gender mainstreaming policy at UNIVEN
- How effective is the implementation of gender equity policy of South Africa at UNIVEN?

5) Please describe the implementation of gender mainstreaming policy at univen.

Probe

- To what extent does gender mainstreaming applies

6) In your opinion, is gender mainstreaming feasible?

Probes

- Generally
- Specifically at the University of Venda

7) Discuss gender mainstreaming challenges at University of Venda?

Probes

- Discuss the participation of men and women in senior management position?
- What are the factors responsible for women's low participation in senior management position?

8) In what way do you think gender equity can be achieved?

* Generally and at univen

9) What are the strategies that appear to be working so far?

- What strategies seem not to be working?

(strategies include; Gender equity policy; Affirmative action; Sensitization; Role models)

Section C: Promotion Criteria and structure

10) In your own opinion, do you think University of Venda management is doing well in terms of the strategy(s) used to achieve gender equity?

Probe

- If no, what mechanisms do you think can be used to enhance women's participation at senior management position?
- Are there measures designed to assist women to participant in managerial position at the university.

11) Discuss the role of gender on promotion criteria at the University of Venda?

Probes

- What are your reasons?
- Are men and women given equal opportunities with regard to promotion?
- What is your experience with respect to the impact of gender on recruitment and promotion?
- Can you describe your experience with regards to equal opportunity given to men and women to participate in decision making?

Thank you so much for your time.