

GENDER EQUALITY AND HAPPINESS AMONG SOUTH AFRICAN WOMEN

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A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of
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UNIVERSITY of the
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ABSTRACT

Gender Equality and Happiness Among South African Women

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Have South African women's lives become happier since the transition to democracy? If they are, could this be linked to gender equality? This is the central question of this study. This study explored a group of women's subjective experiences of gender equality, by which I mean equality on the basis of gender; and happiness, which refers to women's life satisfaction and their affective state. It further explores whether gender equality and happiness are linked. The study assumed that everything being equal, endeavours to liberate women from patriarchy and towards gender equality enhance women's happiness. 1994 ushered in a democratic South Africa and numerous legislative and policy changes were introduced that affect women. Considerable gains have been made at the constitutional and political levels for women's equality and gender justice. This is reflected in the rankings of South Africa on many different indices. Yet, we see numerous challenges facing women including poverty and gender-based violence. This study examined whether the presence of a range of policies as well as affirmative and protective measures for women have impacted on how they experience their lives. In particular, do they feel that they are happy and do they see happiness as linked to gender equality efforts? Given the research question, this study was grounded within a feminist framework. A mixed methods approach utilising both qualitative and quantitative methods was employed. Qualitative individual interviews were conducted with key informants and focus groups with women not involved in the gender sector. The data from the World Values Survey (2013) was used for the quantitative component of the

study. A key finding of this study, and in relation to the instruments employed in this study to assess this, is that women are happy. These findings are borne out by the results of the quantitative as well as the qualitative components of the study. For the women in this study, gender equality and happiness are linked. This relationship is complex and nuanced. Whilst for participants, gender equality and happiness are linked, this relationship is not linear. It is observed that we can have gender equality without happiness and happiness without gender equality. I identified a schema of four quadrants which represents the links between gender equality and happiness, as articulated by the participants. These are: (1) gender equality without happiness; (2) happiness without gender equality; (3) gender inequality is unhappiness; and (4) gender equality is happiness. The study further reveals a complex relationship between gender, race, class and happiness. When considering levels of happiness across different racial backgrounds and class, white women from the upper middle class, lower middle class and working class show more positive affect and higher levels of life satisfaction than women of other racial groups within the particular class. The exception is for the upper class in relation to happiness-as-affect, with black women reporting the highest levels of affect. Poor women reported being the least satisfied with their lives, as well as reporting lower levels of affect. The results indicate that poor white women are the least happy (affect) across race groups, and poor indian women are the least satisfied with their lives. This study aims to contribute to the understanding and complexities of the relationship between gender equality and happiness, which has particular relevance for scholarship in these fields, as well as for policy and programmatic interventions.

June 2018

Keywords

Gender equality, gender justice, happiness, life satisfaction, affect, feminism, mixed-methods, postcolonial theory, social constructionist theory, intersectionality, capability approach.

DECLARATION

I declare that *Gender Equality and Happiness Among South African Women* is my own work, that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

Carmine Rustin

June 2018

Signed



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I wrote my first story, comprising five sentences, as a Grade 3 pupil. This was a hard task for me as an 8 year old. Little did I imagine that I would one day attempt a much longer story in the form of this PhD. Over the years, there have been many people who have played an important role in my education and whose guidance had prepared me well for the PhD journey. I am appreciative and grateful for the love, support and lessons that I have learnt on this path.

My heartfelt thanks to all the participants of this study. Had it not been for your generosity and time my study would not have been possible. A special word of thanks to Ingrid Leukes who assisted me with arranging some of the focus groups.

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Ketso, my sugar pie, you could not understand why it was taking me so long to get done. Your words of encouragement, “Are you done yet?” or “I hope that you are done when I get back from tennis mama” kept me on my toes.

Kopano, it is beautiful living a gender equal and happy life.

In loving memory of my mom and dad, Helen and John Rustin, who would have been immensely proud of my achievement.

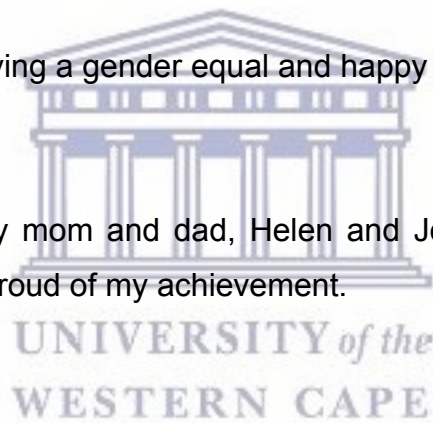


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Chapter One: Introduction

The state may not unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds, including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth (The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996).

In South Africa, a woman is killed by her intimate partner every eight hours (Abrahams, Matthews, Jewkes, Martin & Lombard, 2012).

“Sometimes we lose debates because we become emotional so now we want experts to argue” (Bathabile Dlamini quoted in Hunter, 2017, July 2).¹

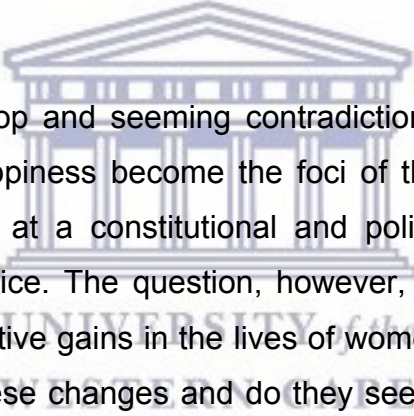
“Mduduzi Manana pleads guilty to all three counts of assault” (Goba, 2017)².

South Africa is undoubtedly a much better place to live in today than before 1994. Having witnessed a largely peaceful transition from a pariah apartheid state to a democratic state where equality is guaranteed before the law (*de jure*), the country offers more rights and justice for all. As seen in the first quotation above, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996) set out to rectify the injustices of the past and eliminate the various forms of discrimination that were the hallmarks of an apartheid state. Improving the quality of life of all became the mantra of the post-apartheid government. Gender equality took a focal point in the reforms introduced in legislation and government programmes in a new democratic society.

¹ Bathabile Dlamini, President of the African National Conference Women’s League on why 6 male representatives were included in its delegation to the policy conference of the African National Congress in July 2017.

² In August 2017, the then Deputy Minister for Higher Education and Training, Mduduzi Manana, assaulted three women after one of the women allegedly called him gay. He was fined R100 000 and 500 hours of community service. He resigned, prior to being sentenced, as Deputy Minister reportedly after the President of South Africa, issued him with an ultimatum.

Yet, all is not well. Violence against women is pervasive, indicative of the intransigence of gender and social injustice. A deputy Minister, who is in a position of power in government and who ought to protect the values of the Constitution, commits violence against women and in so doing, shows disregard for women, gender rights and contempt for the legislation that he is meant to uphold. At the same time, the African National Congress Women's League, which at the time was advocating for the election of the first woman president of the African National Congress (ANC), and thus indirectly the first woman president of South Africa were the ANC to win the 2019 general elections, thought nothing untoward with including six male delegates in their delegation to the ANC's policy conference, as, they believed, the women delegates could not be relied upon to ensure that they put forward arguments at the conference which were not "emotional".



It is against this backdrop and seeming contradictions in South Africa, that gender equality and happiness become the foci of this study. Considerable gains have been made at a constitutional and political level for women's equality and gender justice. The question, however, is whether these gains have translated into positive gains in the lives of women. Have women's lives become happier with these changes and do they see happiness as linked to these changes? These are essentially the questions that underpin this study.

This chapter introduces the research context and outlines the legislative framework which foregrounds gender equality in South Africa. I then present the rationale for this study and its significance for existing literature, research and policies on gender equality and happiness. The research aims and the methodological processes guiding the study are next presented. The chapter concludes with an outline of the structure of the subsequent chapters of the dissertation.

1.1 Research context

1.1.1 Sketch of South Africa's legislative context foregrounding gender

Gender equality is guaranteed in South African laws. South Africa is a leader in respect of its progressive rights accorded to women, and towards gender and sexual equality and justice in general. Since 1994, the country has observed important legal and policy changes in the political, economic and social spheres. Civil society organisations, feminist and women's organisations, LGBTIQ+ organisations (which address heteronormative discrimination) and scholars have been active in lobbying for these changes (see Gouws, 2006; Hassim, 2005b). These changes were aimed at not only removing and addressing the racial and classed discriminations related to the racial capitalist system of apartheid and colonization, but also discrimination based on, among others, sex, gender, sexual orientation and culture.

The democratic moment ushered in progressive legislation, as well as the ratification of a number of gender related international agreements, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and the Beijing Platform of Action, which seek to redress injustices against women. Most significant amongst the legislation is the founding law of democratic South Africa: The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996). The supreme law of the country, the obligations imposed by the Constitution must be fulfilled, specifically in the context of this study, obligations around women's rights and gender equality. The Constitution is unequivocal on gender equality.

A significant piece of legislation that defines equality and gives effect to the provisions of section 9 of the Constitution, is the Promotion of Equality and the Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act, passed in 2000. The Equality Act, as it is called, defines equality to include "the full and equal enjoyment of rights

and freedoms as contemplated in the Constitution and includes *de jure* and *de facto* equality and also equality in terms of outcomes” (Promotion of Equality and the Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act, 4 of 2000 (RSA), p. 4). *De jure* equality refers to equality before the law, whilst *de facto* equality refers to equality in practice.

Even with existing constitutional rights and progressive legislation, the struggle for gender equality and gender justice is an ongoing one. As indicated elsewhere, violence against women continues to be a key challenge. In this respect, the Domestic Violence Act was passed in 1998. Through this Act, women are afforded greater protection against actual or threatened physical violence, sexual, emotional, verbal, psychological and economic abuse, as well as intimidation, harassment, stalking, damage to or destruction of property, or entry into their home without consent. Another significant piece of legislation is the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act (No. 32 of 2007). This Act seeks to strengthen the fight against sexual crimes, including sexual crimes against women, and introduces an expanded definition of rape, which is applicable to all forms of sexual penetration without consent, irrespective of gender.

In addition, a number of institutions were established to give effect to Chapter Nine of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. Chapter Nine of the Constitution establishes a number of institutions to support democracy. The Commission on Gender Equality was one of the institutions established specifically to “promote respect for gender equality and the protection, development and attainment of gender equality” (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996, p. 106).

After the general elections in 2009, the Department of Women, Children and Persons with Disabilities was established. The mandate of the Department was to drive, accelerate and oversee government’s equity, equality and

empowerment agenda on sectors pertaining to women, children and persons with disabilities. The Department however faced many challenges during its tenure and appeared to grapple with executing its mandate. After the 2014 elections, the Department was not re-established and instead the President announced the establishment of the Ministry of Women within the Presidency.

Within the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa, and after the 2014 general elections, the Portfolio Committee on Women in the Presidency was established to oversee government activities relating to women. As early as 2008, a Multiparty Women's Caucus was established in Parliament to provide a platform for women across political parties to raise matters as they relate to women in the activities undertaken by Parliament, to influence discussions on issues affecting women, and to act in an advisory capacity in some instances.

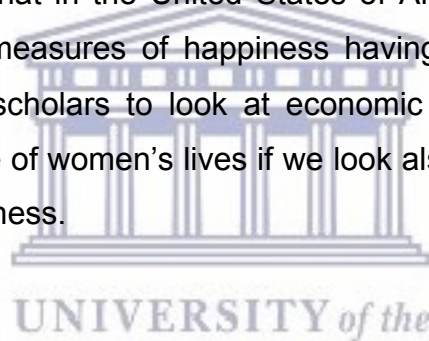
It is evident that the South African national government has developed a wide range of measures at policy, legal and institutional level to address particular challenges of gender inequality, as well as set up the necessary gender machinery to drive and monitor these processes. What this study looks at is what these measures have meant to women, and whether these measures have brought about a positive change in the lives of women.

1.1.2 Towards the right for women to be happy

Arguably, central to the policies of any democratic government should be the ideal to improve the quality of lives of its people. Quality of life is often used interchangeably with happiness, subjective well-being, life satisfaction, well-being or utility (see Helliwell, Layard & Sachs, 2012; Veenhoven, 2004). This is how it will be used in this study. As I show in Chapter Three, this interchangeable use of the terms was to become problematic later on in this study. Notwithstanding, the definition of happiness employed in this study

entailed the “overall enjoyment of your life as-a-whole” (Veenhoven, 2004, p. 6).

The ideal of improving the quality of life of the people is enshrined in the Preamble of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996, p. 1). Traditionally, economic development has served as an indicator of quality of life of people and progress. Specifically, measuring Gross National Product (GNP) served as a measure of progress, where a higher household income signifies an improvement in the lives of the poor (Sachs, 2012). However, as contended in the first World Happiness Report, higher average incomes have not necessarily improved quality of lives or well-being (Sachs, 2012). The report references the finding that in the United States of America, GNP per capita has risen without the measures of happiness having increased. Whilst it is imperative for gender scholars to look at economic progress of women, it gives us a better picture of women’s lives if we look also at other measures of progress such as happiness.



1.2 Why gender equality and happiness research matters

Whilst research on gender, gender justice and gender equality are established fields in South Africa and elsewhere, and happiness studies, a *relatively* new field of study in South Africa and globally, no research has been undertaken on the relation between gender equality and happiness in South Africa. This is a gap that not only is evident in the literature in South Africa, but globally. This study thus presents a unique opportunity to fill the gap on what we know and do not know about gender equality and its links to happiness.

As indicated, there is a gap in our knowledge about the linkages between gender equality and happiness. Happiness studies often draw on gender as a

variable but do not consider whether gender equality is an indicator of happiness, or whether there has been an improvement in women's happiness and subjective well-being stemming from gender equality policies, programmes or legislation. From a survey of the literature, I have identified three studies that have looked at the relation between gender equality and happiness. I have drawn on these three articles when interpreting the findings of this study. The first is a study by Stevenson and Wolfers (2009) who argue that despite women's lives having improved over different measures in the United States, their well-being has declined in absolute terms as well as in relation to men (Stevenson & Wolfers, 2009). The second study undertaken by Mencarini and Sironi (2012) investigates the relationship between gender inequality (as expressed through the division of labour in the household and gender inequality at a country level) and subjective well-being. They found that performing a large share of household work impacts negatively on women's happiness, more especially for women who were employed for more than 30 hours per week outside of the household (Mencarini & Sironi, 2012.) The third study undertaken by Holter (2014) looks at whether or not men stand to gain or lose from gender equality, in relation to well-being and health, which includes factors such as happiness, sexual satisfaction and depression. The results indicate that in the United States, an individual's chances of well-being (both men and women) are "more than twice as high in states with a high gender equality score, compared to states with a low gender equality score" (Holter, 2014, p. 521). Similar results are seen in Europe, with men and women twice as likely to feel happy in the three most gender-equal countries as compared to the three least gender-equal countries (Holter, 2014, p. 522). These studies provide important findings about the link between gender equality and happiness. It is important to note that all three studies are quantitative and thus the findings are generalizable for the countries from which the data originate. These studies, however, do not offer the nuances and richness of narrative that qualitative studies would offer. This study offers this insight and a more complex understanding of how gender equality and happiness are linked.

Furthermore, the present study contributes to research in the field of happiness studies. Whilst many scholars speak about happiness, subjective well-being and life satisfaction interchangeably, as has been the case in my study, most studies do not look at how laypersons³ speak of or define happiness. Given the qualitative nature of this study, I asked participants specifically what happiness means to them. The findings offer a rich insight into conceptualisations of happiness from a laypersons perspective, which spans beyond the normative understanding of happiness as eudaimonic or hedonic.

As mentioned, the government of South Africa has introduced a plethora of legislation and other measures, which aims to improve the lives of women. These measures have included gender mainstreaming, as the strategy to address gender inequality and the introduction of quotas for women's political representation in government and other structures (as seen in the policy of the ANC), amongst others. The South African government has tended to follow a very neoliberal, technicist approach to gender equality (Gouws, 2006; Hassim, 2003). The focus has been on meeting certain 'measurable' objectives and ticking of boxes, without examining what women feel, want or their perceptions on matters pertaining to their lives. This study critiques this technicist approach and provides a more nuanced way of looking at gender justice and gender equality, by foregrounding the voices, perceptions and experiences of women. With its specific focus on gender equality and happiness, this study provides evidence of whether women view the legislation as having an impact on their lives, and whether their lives have improved. The study therefore advances unique insights, which are often not garnered, as many studies use 'objective' indicators to define and measure gender equality.

³ Laypersons are defined in this study as persons not involved in the gender sector nor in scholarship related to either gender, gender equality or happiness.

Furthermore, this study measures participants' subjective well-being and constructions of women's sense of happiness, and therefore presents policy makers with rich data to monitor and evaluate gender related policy, and the findings may serve as an important guide to decision-making. By looking at happiness, my intention was to provide evidence of the impact of policies and legislation passed, and to explore whether these policies have led to improvement and progress in the lives of women. This study thus serves as an important indication of how far South Africa has come in improving the lives of women, through the introduction of progressive gender policies and legislation.

By focusing on happiness, I foreground that we are affective beings and that affective well-being is important. Clough (2007) best articulates affect as "bodily capacities to affect and be affected or the augmentation or diminution of a body's capacity to act, to engage, to connect, such that autoaffectation is linked to the self-feeling of being alive - that is 'aliveness' or vitality" (p. 2). Affect theories further acknowledge that some bodies are more likely to feel particular affects and emotions than others, given unequal power relations and social injustices based on how bodies are gendered, raced and classed (Coleman, 2016). My study takes cognisance of how women from different backgrounds experience this affect. By focusing on affect, my study attempts to contribute to the body of knowledge that takes affect seriously.

Given the above rationale, the study makes a contribution to 1) the policy discussions and implementation of policy and programmes; 2) theoretical/conceptual understandings of gender equality and happiness; and 3) future research in relation to gender legislation, gender equality initiatives and the well-being of women. Sectors that will benefit from the study include government, and more specifically the South African government, institutions receiving their mandates from the South African Constitution, non-governmental organizations, and scholars in the fields related to gender and happiness studies, locally and globally.

1.3 Research focus

The central question in this study is two-fold. First, I wish to find out whether gender equality policies and practices reportedly impact positively on women's lives, do they 'make women happy' (also referred to as subjective well-being or life satisfaction)? Second, I want to examine whether it is possible to have gender equality without happiness and vice versa.

The study departs from the assumption that gender equality and well-being are social goods in and of themselves. Furthermore, it is assumed that gender equality makes women happy, that the project of destabilising patriarchy and male power over women will or should enhance women's life satisfaction.

Within this larger aim, the following are the objectives of the study:

- To explore a group of South African women's definitions and understandings of gender equality
- To explore a group of South African women's reported subjective experiences and perceptions of the effectiveness of gender equality measures in contemporary South Africa
- To explore how a group of South African women define happiness in their lives and in the lives of other women, and whether they believe that happiness is or should be linked to gender equality, and in what ways
- To examine the intersection of race⁴ and class in women's constructions and experiences of gender equality and happiness.

⁴ While I consider race to be a social construction with material effects, I employ the categories constructed under apartheid of black, coloured, indian and white (Population Registration Act 30 of 1950, RSA). I do this because the survey data follows the same categorisations and as I used these categories in the qualitative component of this study. Most importantly, I do this as racial inequalities continue to shape the lives of South African women.

1.4 Theoretical framework

South Africa is shaped by its past. The ravages of slavery, colonialism and apartheid continue to have an impact on our lives today. Postcolonial and postcolonial feminist theories thus provide a foundational theoretical framework in which this study is located (see Chapter Two for this discussion).

An intersectional lens further lends itself to this study. As has been widely argued in global contexts, women are not a homogenous group. Black feminists, including Audre Lorde, bell hooks, Kimberle Crenshaw and Patricia Hill Collins, had long argued that the struggles of black women are not the same as those of white women or black men. The struggles of black women were rendered invisible, as gender injustices were addressed from the perspective of white women, and race injustices from the perspective of black men. The term intersectionality was introduced by Crenshaw (1989, 1991), which takes the complexities and multiple oppressions of (black) women into account. It emerged as a critique in challenging dominant discourses primarily within the white feminist movement. I return to the discussions on intersectionality in Chapter Two. In investigating gender equality and happiness, it was important for me to look at other social identities such as race, class, amongst others. Because this study foregrounds intersections of gender, race, class, age with other social categorisations, a feminist postcolonial framework, with a focus on intersectionality, was ideal in locating this study.

Postcolonial feminists, and black feminists in particular, have criticised western, white feminisms for assuming that all women face the same kind of oppression, and that women constitute a unitary group in anyway. In Chapter Two, I draw on the work of Chandra Mohanty, who critiques the work of western feminist scholars, by arguing that a number of these writings continue

to ignore the heterogeneity of women in the 'third world', portraying women as a 'composite, singular 'third-world woman' (Mohanty, 1988, p. 62).

It is because of the history of slavery, colonialism and apartheid that postcolonial feminists have argued that gender (in)equality and gender related harm cannot be considered without taking women's (and men's) multiple forms of oppression and power into account. Hence, models of gender equality within a postcolonial feminist framework consider the intersections of gender with race, class, age, culture, nationality, and other social categorisations. Policies and legislation thus need to take other inequalities, such as class, race, age, sexual orientation, into account. Postcolonial feminist perspectives further imply that in thinking about women and happiness we cannot only think about gender, but of the colonial experiences of gender, as it shapes women's notions of (in)equality and (un)happiness.

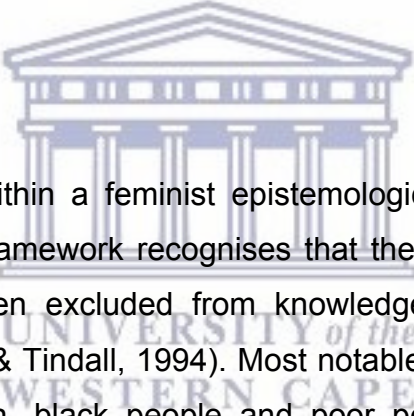
I further utilise Sen and Nussbaum's capability approach and Fraser's trivalent view of justice as an analytical lens in this study. Proponents of the capability approach argue that one cannot look at well-being without looking at what people are capable of doing and being. Individuals' functionings (achievements) and capabilities (opportunities) are a key focus in this approach to justice, and resources become a facilitator of these functionings and capabilities. Nussbaum (1999, 2003) further sets out a clear list of capabilities that should be considered as minimum for social justice to be achieved.

Fraser's (2005) trivalent view of justice is orientated to the norm of participatory parity. This implies that a just society should enable all to participate equally with their peers, and that obstacles which impede their participation should be dismantled (Fraser, 2005). People can be prevented from participating as peers due to economic impediments and thus experience distributive injustices (Fraser, 2007a). They can also suffer

misrecognition or status inequality. The third dimension of Fraser's view of justice is that of the political, which is concerned with representation – it is about social belonging and who can 'rightfully' make distribution and recognition claims (Fraser, 2007a).

As discussed above, my research is located within a feminist postcolonial framework, as it allows for 'competing and disparate voices among women' (Amaduime, 1997) in the construction of knowledge. I have further utilised the capability approach and Fraser's trivalent view of justice as analytical lens in understanding participants' narratives of gender equality and happiness and its links.

1.5 Methodology



This study is located within a feminist epistemological and methodological framework. A feminist framework recognises that the voices of marginalised persons have often been excluded from knowledge generation (Banister, Burman, Parker, Taylor & Tindall, 1994). Most notable has been the absence of the voices of women, black people and poor people, amongst others. Feminist researchers have critiqued the androcentric biases in research undertaken. Feminist research is thus geared towards challenging and addressing discriminations and injustices, and seeks to transform the lives of women. My study is aligned with these principles of feminist research, and endeavours to include women in the process of knowledge construction, and also to make a contribution to enhancing the well-being of women. The study adopted a mixed methods approach utilising both qualitative and quantitative methods. Tolman and Szalacha (1999) have shown how both qualitative and quantitative methods can be used effectively when conducting feminist research. Notwithstanding, it is important that when using a mixed methods approach, the lived experiences of the participants remains central to the

enquiry (Tolman & Szalacha, 1999) and that the feminist intensions of the study are not lost.

Qualitative research methods best suit the exploration of what gender equality and happiness mean to the women participants of this study. The study therefore employs both focus groups and individual, in-depth interviews, as will be elaborated in detail in Chapter Five. Individual interviews were conducted with key informants (women) and focus groups with women who are not involved in the gender sector (laypersons).

Eleven in-depth individual interviews were held with women key informants. They were selected for their activism, scholarly work and/or organisational work related to gender, gender equality or gender justice. Three focus groups were conducted with women, who were not key informants, but who could share their lived experiences and perceptions of gender related policies and programmes, and who could reflect on their subjective well-being. The interviews were transcribed by a transcriber and myself. All the interviews that were not transcribed by me were nonetheless checked by me for accuracy. Thematic analysis was employed to analyse the data. I used ATLAS.ti to manage the coding and thematising of the data.

Quantitative research was used to investigate whether there is a correlation between gender equality and happiness. Quantitative techniques allow one to gather data from a large number of participants, without necessarily getting in-depth information. The World Values Survey Wave 6 data set for South Africa was used. SPSS was used to analyse the data.

1.6 Dissertation structure

In this chapter I have introduced the research context and outlined the gendered legislative framework which foregrounds gender equality. I have presented the rationale and the significance of this study, as well as the theoretical frameworks that guide the project. Lastly, the research aims as well as the methodological processes framing this study have been set out.

Chapter Two contextualises the study with a review of the key frameworks, in particular postcolonial feminist theory with a focus on intersectionality and social constructionist theory, that underpins my understanding of gender, gender equality and gender justice. The chapter further sets out the capability approach and Nancy Fraser's trivalent view of justice, which are used as analytical tools for assessing how participants speak of gender equality and happiness.



Chapter Three presents a critical assessment of the theoretical frameworks that guide empirical research on happiness, and locates this study within the affective turn with a focus on happiness, with happiness being defined as the overall enjoyment of your life as a whole.

Chapter Four considers gender equality gains made at a global level by looking at key international gender instruments. The chapter also considers the action taken by the South African government to address gender (and race and class) inequalities, which includes legislative reforms, as well as, very briefly, paints a picture of the challenges that women continue to face globally and locally, notwithstanding these high level policy commitments.

Chapter Five is an account of the methodological choices which underpin this study. It includes a description of the methodological framework of feminist research methodology, the research design, data collection and data analyses methods, as well as ethical considerations and procedures undertaken to ensure an ethical study. The chapter also presents a self-reflection of the research process and dynamics of the research.

Chapter Six presents the quantitative findings of the study. It considers the question of whether there is a correlation between gender equality and happiness, using the World Values Survey Wave 6 dataset.

In Chapter Seven, the first reporting the qualitative research findings, I review women's perceptions and experiences of the gendered legislative reforms undertaken in South Africa. Next, in Chapter Eight, participants' perceptions and experiences of gender equality and its perceived impact on South African women's lives are discussed under three broad themes i.e. constructions of gender equality, impediments to achieving gender equality, and the attainment of gender equality. The last of the qualitative results chapter, Chapter Nine, presents the findings on women's experiences and perceptions of happiness in their own and women's lives in general. In addition, in this chapter, I turn to the central question of this study: is gender equality and happiness linked, with a focus on the qualitative outcomes of the study.

Finally, Chapter Ten summarises the research findings and discusses the study's empirical and conceptual contributions to gender equality and happiness scholarship, and to policy and programmatic interventions undertaken by activists, the non-governmental sector and government. Lastly, I offer recommendations for future research endeavours within the fields of gender equality and happiness.

Chapter Two: Conceptual frameworks of gender (in)equality and gender (in)justice

2.1 Introduction

Gender (in)equality is grounded in conceptual understanding/analysing/researching of gender. Multiple and proliferating conceptualisations and approaches to gender are at play. This gives credence to the understanding that gender *is* a contested notion. In this chapter, I draw on a number of key frameworks within the larger body of primarily postcolonial theory and social constructionist theory to locate my understanding of gender, which also speak to understandings of gender equality and/or justice.

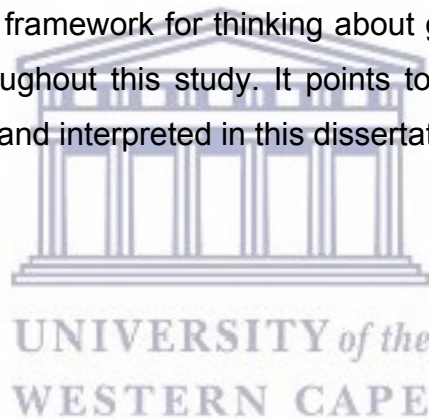
Gender equality and/or gender justice have formed central goals of many local and global feminist campaigns in the last few decades. These campaigns have led to a range of critical ideas and policies about gender equality and justice, such as non-discriminatory gender legislation, being taken up within many nation states and multilateral organisations. The domains of gender equality and justice have, as a result, become vast and increasingly complex, with several competing conceptualisations of gender equality and justice. It would therefore be difficult to present an exhaustive yet comprehensible discussion on the different views and insights into gender equality and justice across all times and places.

Given my positioning as a black feminist, with a personal and political sensitivity to the complexity and intersectionality of gender injustice, this thesis is premised on the understanding that gender equality and justice cannot be achieved in isolation. That is, gender equality and justice struggles have to take into account race, class and age (a list which does not represent all forms of oppression women are subjected to, but are the key areas of

intersectional injustice that I shall pay attention to in this dissertation).

The primary focus of this chapter is to: (1) reflect on gender as a contested notion, drawing on social constructionist and intersectional theories to understand gender; (2) review the notions of how gender equality and gender justice have been understood and theorised in the literature; (3) provide an overview of postcolonial theory and postcolonial feminists conceptualisations of gender equality and justice; and (3) consider three frameworks or theories of justice which are useful when theorising gender justice and gender equality, namely: a theory of patriarchy in understanding gender (in)equality; the human capabilities approach; and the concepts of redistribution, recognition and representation in relation to gender equality and justice. This chapter provides the theoretical framework for thinking about gender, gender equality and gender justice throughout this study. It points to the framework of how results will be analysed and interpreted in this dissertation.

2.2 Theorising gender



Social constructionist theory sees gender as socially constructed, as part of everyday life, and gendering as something that happens as a routine. Our social orders are gendered, and our everyday practices and processes serve to construct and maintain this gendered social order. Gender is built into our social relations, social institutions, including our family, work spaces, laws, religion, government, military and many other spaces (Lorber, 2010). Social constructionist feminist and intersectional feminist scholars in particular, focus on how certain bodies face multiple inequalities – race, gender, social class, ethnicity – and how these inequalities intersect to advantage and disadvantage bodies within the social order. This section provides a synopsis of how gender is located within this study and how gender underpins understandings of gender in(equality).

2.2.1 Gender as a routine accomplishment and ongoing performance

In the 1980s, West and Zimmerman wrote an important article about gender that is still considered as a reference point for many theorists, scholars and researchers today. They proposed that gender is a “routine, methodical and recurring accomplishment” (West & Zimmerman, 1987, p. 126). The arguments made by West and Zimmerman were representative of a growing shift in thinking about gender as essentialist⁵ and binary. They, as do others (see Connell, 2009; Crawford, 2006) argue that men and women ‘do’ gender. “Doing gender involves a complex of socially guided perceptual, interactional and micropolitical activities that cast particular pursuits as expressions of masculine and feminine ‘natures’” (West & Zimmerman, 1987, p. 126). According to West and Zimmerman (1987), doing gender is situated, an emergent feature of social situations, serving as both rationale and outcome of different social activities, and which serves to legitimise the divisions or inequalities of society. Gender is not something that is owned or inherent to the individual, rather it is a characteristic of social situations. Furthermore, women and men are driven to accomplish gender and in return, individuals and institutions are held “gender accountable” in their everyday conduct (Fenstermaker, West & Zimmerman, 2002, p. 26).

As Connell (2009) succinctly puts it, “People engaging in everyday conduct – across a spectrum from conversation and housework to interactional styles and economic behaviour – are held accountable in terms of their presumed ‘sex category,’ and the conduct produced in light of this accountability is not a product of gender; it is gender itself” (p. 105).

Gender is an everyday, routine accomplishment (West & Zimmerman, 1987). Connell and Pearse (2015) suggest that the work of West and Zimmerman

⁵ Essentialists view gender as a quality, trait or something resident within an individual, describing one’s personality, cognitive process and moral judgement (Bohan, 1993).

“emphasized the fragility of all identity categories, and saw gender as, in principle, fluid rather than fixed” (p. 66). “Doing gender” thus involves displaying behaviours regarded as acceptable feminine or masculine performances. In everyday life, examples would include a man opening a door for a woman, girls being expected to enjoy playing with dolls and not cars, women being responsible for domestic work, amongst others. Just as doing gender requires you to display normative gender behavior, you are simultaneously held accountable for your gender appropriate or in-appropriate behaviour.

Individuals are thus often held accountable for failing to do gender appropriately. This – holding others to account – can be enforced in very violent ways. Domestic violence, where women are beaten for not behaving in womanly ways, is an example of individual female subjects being held to account for their gender performances. Another example is the plethora of forms of violence perpetrated against lesbians, gays, and other non-gender conforming persons in countries like the Cameroon, Kuwait, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Russia, South Africa and Uganda (Human Rights Watch, 2010; Human Rights Watch, 2011; Human Rights Watch, 2012a; Human Rights Watch, 2012b; Human Rights Watch, 2014a; Human Rights Watch, 2014b; Human Rights Watch, 2015).

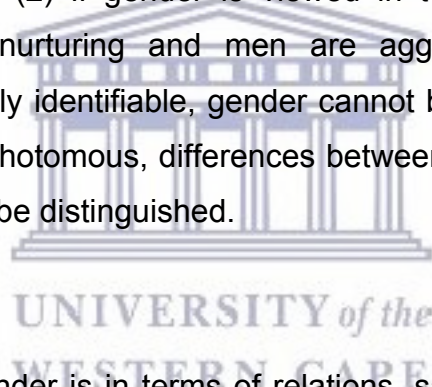
Understanding gender (as a practice and an accomplishment) and gender relations becomes imperative in challenging gender social injustices in the home, communities, states and globally. West and Zimmerman (1987) argue that social movements and feminists can provide the ideology to challenge institutional arrangements and power relations that have women relegated to subordination. Furthermore, the state can and should play a role in ensuring that matters of inequality are addressed, by promulgating laws that ensure that women are recognised and treated equally.

The arguments advanced by West and Zimmerman are useful in understanding not only what gender is but also how we might understand gender equality, a point I shall return to later in this chapter. West and Zimmerman have in fact argued that we should look towards the enactment of legislation and feminist arguments to challenge the existing gender arrangements. And yet, whilst their idea of gender as a doing that is so routine, a 'doing' that is such an everyday occurrence that we do not even recognise it, is powerful, the question is, what is the space for agency in this argument? If gender is used to sustain existing institutional arrangements, then the argument seems to suggest that individuals do not have agency and cannot get out of reproducing unfair gender relations? On the contrary, the work of feminist activists and academics demonstrates agency in challenging existing social orders. The individual actions and behaviours of men and women, in their daily lives, also demonstrate agency in questioning unequal gender relations. Whilst gender may be used to sustain existing institutional arrangements, gender can and is used to mobilise against social injustice. However, as far as the issue of legislation is concerned, I would also agree that the state, as one of the key institutional actors, has a role to play in ending gender discrimination and shifting gender arrangements that disadvantage women. The state is historically a site of gender oppression, but has in recent decades, as exemplified in policies evident in the Nordic countries but also in parts of the global South, made important interventions in addressing gender and sexual inequalities, by formulating policies that empower women and protect sexual rights. Whilst legislation is an important aspect of addressing inequalities, social constructionists acknowledge that legislation is not enough to address the everyday informal sexism, racism and other discriminations that exist in social orders, gendered social relations and gendered institutions.

2.2.2 Gender as social structure of relations

Connell (2009) has argued that gender is something that we take for granted,

meaning that we often do not stop to think about it, unless it does not conform to the 'natural' order of how women and men should be or relate to each other. For example, in some countries, same-sex relations are frowned upon, even considered unlawful because they're regarded as unnatural. On the other hand, a marriage between a woman and a man is taken for granted and not seen as gendered. Connell (2009) says, "gender arrangements are thus, at the same time, a sources of pleasure, recognition and identity, and sources of injustice and harm. This means that gender is inherently political – but it also means the politics can be complicated and difficult" (p. 7). She observes that the discussions around gender in society emphasise a dichotomy, which stems from an apparent biological divide. This is a fallacy for a many different reasons: (1) whilst people often believe that there are only two types of gender (that it is dichotomous), human life and human character cannot be divided into two types; (2) if gender is viewed in terms of difference (for example women are nurturing and men are aggressive), where these differences are not easily identifiable, gender cannot be seen; and (3) where gender is viewed as dichotomous, differences between women as a group or men as a group cannot be distinguished.



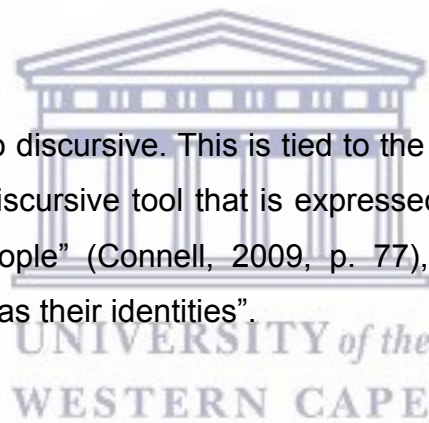
One way to think of gender is in terms of relations, says Connell. The focus thus moves from gender differences. Gender can be viewed as a matter of the "social relations in which individuals and groups act" (Connell, 2009, p. 10). Gender is furthermore a social structure and involves a relationship with bodies. Taking all of these concepts into account, Connell (2009) argues "Gender is the structure of social relations that centres in the reproductive arena, and the set of practices that bring reproductive distinctions between bodies into social processes" (p. 11).

We can distinguish, according to Connell (2009), between four dimensions of gender relations, which she refers to as: (1) Power relations: direct, discursive, colonizing; (2) Production, consumption and gendered

accumulation; (3) Cathexis: emotional relations, and (4) Symbolism, culture and discourse.

Power relations: Under the power dimension of gender, with specific reference to direct power relations, Connell (2009) states that power and the concept of patriarchy was central to women's liberation, with men being perceived as a "dominant sex" and rape as "men's assertion of power over women" (Connell, 2009, p. 76). Not only do individual men exert direct power over individual women but power is also exerted by the state. Examples of state power over individual women include the interrogation of rape victims in court over the clothing that they were wearing, sexual history and reasons for laying charges of rape (Connell, 2009, p. 77).

Power relations are also discursive. This is tied to the view that Foucault held of power: power as a discursive tool that is expressed "through the ways we talk and categorize people" (Connell, 2009, p. 77), "impacting directly on people's bodies as well as their identities".

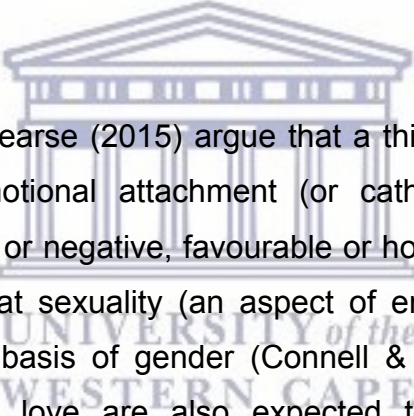


Power is further viewed as colonising power. Prime examples of this power are in the centuries' old colonising power of countries such as Britain, France, Spain, Portugal, Germany, amongst others. Connell (2009) argues that colonial power has always been contested, with many women's organisations playing a significant role in colonial liberation struggles.

Production, consumption and gender accumulation: The second dimension of gender refers to production, consumption and gender accumulation. Today, as in the past, the sexual division of labour is still very prominent. Some work may be designated as women's work and be performed by women and other work by men. The world of productive work has been associated with men,

whilst the domestic life is defined as women's work, and can be classified as "domestic consumption". Yet, domestic work is often not seen as work.

Division of (all) labour may however differ across cultures and over time (Connell, 2009; Connell & Pearse, 2015). Connell acknowledges that, whilst women and men often share work, they find themselves in differing spaces in the economy. Institutions, being gendered spaces, in many cases favour men when it comes to wages, positions, benefits, etc. Women's labour is frequently exploited as cheap labour. Women often find themselves in vulnerable positions of being employed in the informal sector, as can be seen in South Africa, in the domestic labour market or as seasonal workers in the agricultural sector.



Cathexis: Connell and Pearse (2015) argue that a third dimension of gender relations is that of emotional attachment (or cathexis). Such emotional relations can be positive or negative, favourable or hostile. Research cited by the authors indicates that sexuality (an aspect of emotional attachment) is often organised on the basis of gender (Connell & Pearse, 2015). Sexual attraction and romantic love are also expected to be across genders. Prejudice or hostility against same sex love or against women (misogyny) is seen as cathexis as well. Hostile emotional relations can often lead to extremely violent behavior, as seen in cases of honour killings in Pakistan and India, and the murder of gay and lesbian people in South Africa.

Symbolism, culture and discourse: The fourth dimension of gender relations is that of symbolism, culture and discourse (Connell, 2009; Connell & Pearse, 2015). Connell and Pearse cite examples of gender symbolism as seen in the struggles during Apartheid in South Africa. They refer to the Inkatha Freedom Party mobilising men around the images of 'warriors', the African National Congress' Youth League mobilising themselves as 'young lions'. Gender

symbolism is further expressed through language, dress and culture (Connell & Pearse, 2015).

Connell and Pearse (2015) argue that the four dimensions of gender are to be used as tools for thinking about gender. These gender dimensions are interwoven and interlinked and are not separate conventions. Here, the leaning is towards thinking of gender as interwoven and interacting with other structures – towards intersectionality, which is discussed later in this chapter.

Gender relations and gender arrangements change (Connell & Pearse, 2015; Walby, 1997). These changes are often the result of external pressures, such as the introduction of new state policies, technology or pressures by social movements or pressure groups, globalisation, colonialism, amongst possible forces. Change can also occur due to internal pressures. As argued by Connell and Pearse (2015), gender can be viewed as a structure, and structures change. “Structures develop *crisis tendencies*, that is, internal contradictions that undermine current patterns, and force change in the structure itself” (Connell & Pearse, 2015, p. 87). Change can thus take place in any of the four dimensions of gender discussed above. We have seen this in women’s employment or the production dimension. Over the years, there has been an increase in women taking up paid employment. We have not only witnessed the number of women in the workforce increasing but have also observed the number of women in decision-making positions in organisations increase, an issue that was the subject of discussion in the first chapter.

Within this perspective, gender is viewed as a social structure, and as argued above, structures can change. Change can be brought about in any of the four dimensions discussed above to ensure gender equality and well-being. One can organise institutions, including policies to facilitate women’s

empowerment and well-being. As was alluded to in Chapter One and as will be discussed in Chapter Four, legislation has been introduced in South Africa to ensure that women are protected and their well-being taken into account through labour legislation, including the Employment Equity Act, No 55 of 1998 and the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, No 75 of 1997.

2.2.3 Intersectionality

King (1997) has argued that black women have long understood and acknowledged the commonalities that they share with all women and with black men in global racist societies, but have also poignantly understood the interactive oppressions that they face as black women. Since the 1960s, the writings of a number of black feminists and activists took prominence, critiquing earlier feminists for assuming that they spoke on behalf of or represented the struggles of black women. During this period, we saw critical black feminist theories being offered by Crenshaw (1989, 1997), Davis (1981, 1984), Hill Collins (1990), hooks (1997) and King (1997), amongst others.

Black feminist theories are neither homogenous nor static, as there is considerable diversity among black women. However, Guy-Sheftall (1995) speaking about the United States of America, has argued:

- (1) Black women experience a special kind of oppression and suffering in this country which is racist, sexist, classist because of their dual racial and gender identity and their limited access to resources;
- (2) This 'triple jeopardy' has meant that the problems, concerns and needs of Black women are different in many ways from those of white women and Black men;
- (3) Black women must struggle for Black liberation and gender equality simultaneously;
- (4) There is no inherent contradiction to eradicate sexism and racism as well as other "isms" which plague the community, such as classism and heterosexism;
- (5) Black women's

commitment to the liberation of blacks and women is profoundly rooted in their lived experience (p. 2).

In the struggle against racism and sexism, black women's oppression has often been rendered invisible (Crenshaw, 1989, 1991; hooks, 1997; King, 1997). It has been argued that the experiences of black women have often been assumed to be the same as black men (as seen in the struggles for racial liberation) and that of white women (struggles against sexism). As bell hooks has contended:

No other group in America has so had their identity socialized out of existence as have black women. We are rarely recognized as a group separate and distinct from black men, or a present part of the larger group "women" in this culture...When black people are talked about the focus tends to be on black men; and when women are talked about the focus tends to be on white women (hooks, 1981, p. 7).

Multiple jeopardy – an interactive model coined by King (1997) – refers to the several, simultaneous oppressions that black women experience, as well as the "multiplicative relationships among them" (King, 1997, p. 223). By this she refers to the formula of racism multiplied by sexism multiplied by classism. Crenshaw has argued that discursive and political practices that separate race from gender and gender from race create complex problems of exclusion and distortion for black women (1997, p. 247, 1989, 1991). Given the multidimensions of black women's experiences, a single axis framework of analysis will not do justice to the experiences of black women i.e. understanding women's oppression only from a racial oppression perspective or from a gender perspective or a class perspective (Crenshaw, 1989). A framework which takes these complexities into consideration, and which acknowledges that women face multiple subordinations which intersect, is necessary to understand and analyse the oppressions that black women face. Hill Collins (1990) has referred to this as a matrix of domination, and

Crenshaw (1989, 1991) as intersectionality. An intersectional framework takes the complexities and multiple oppressions into account. The intersectional discourse has also featured prominently in the writings of South African scholars and scholars on the continent. Salo (1994, 2005) has argued that defining feminism only on the basis of gender assumes that our identity as being a woman has nothing to do with race, class, sexuality and nation, but only with gender. An intersectional framework is furthermore observed in the work of de la Rey (1997), Moolman (2009) and Shefer and Ratele (2006).

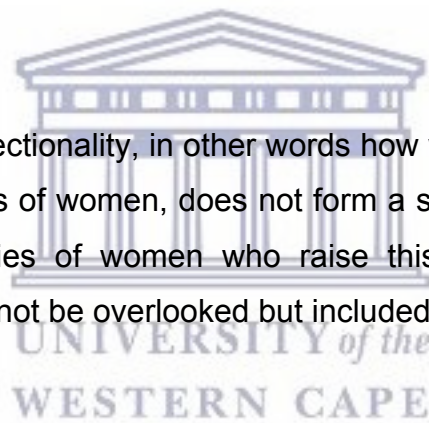
Crenshaw (1997) speaks of three aspects of intersectionality. Firstly, with structural intersectionality, she refers to the way women of colour are situated within corresponding structures of subordination. As example, one can see how black women can be subordinate because of their race as well as their gender, and that these have complex compounding effects. Secondly, Crenshaw refers to political intersectionality as the intersection of race and gender, where the frameworks highlighting gender and frameworks highlighting race are seen as oppositional to one another, thus erasing the experiences of black women or overlooking or excluding black women. Representational intersectionality, the third aspect of intersectionality, refers to the manner in which race and gender images are portrayed, in amongst others, the media and popular culture, that create specific narratives of women of colour, most notably narratives related to sexuality (Crenshaw, 1997).

When looking at structural intersectionality in this study, I would need to consider how the women participants, and black women in particular, speak of gender (in)equality in relation to their class position, whether they have had access to educational opportunities, employment opportunities, etc. When considering violence against women, centres assisting abused women often not only have to assist with counseling around the abusive relationship, but also have to deal with the additional challenge that women are often forced to

flee their home with their children who are dependent on them.

Embedded in this study is how race and gender intersect, in what Crenshaw refers to as political intersectionality. The experiences of black men are often considered when looking at race discrimination, and white women when looking at patriarchy. However, this renders the lived experiences of black women invisible. Illustrating this, Mama (1995) has argued that the neglect of gender within black psychology has tended to overlook the role of race and how it has been implicated in the production and reproduction of gender. In examining gender equality and happiness, it is vital to look at the particulars of how race and gender intersect, when considering how satisfied women are with their lives as a whole or how happy they are.

Representational intersectionality, in other words how women are portrayed in the media or the images of women, does not form a specific point of analysis in my study. The stories of women who raise this in the course of my fieldwork, however, will not be overlooked but included as part of the analysis.

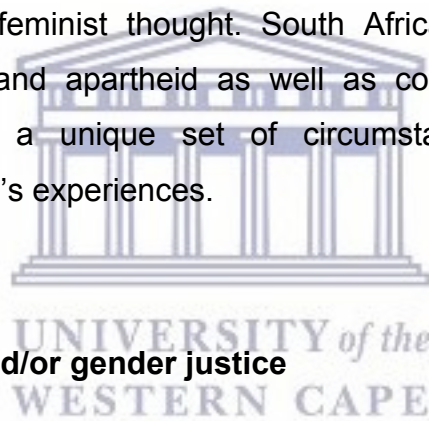


Intersectionality theorists thus argue that the multiple marginalisations of gender, sexuality, race, age and class at an individual and institutional level creates social and political stratification, which requires policy solutions that take these intersections into consideration (Hancock, 2007). In the same manner, experiences of gender (in)equality and happiness cannot be understood outside of how 'doing' gender interacts with other social categorisations of race, class, sexuality, age, for example.

In concluding this section, social constructionist theory provides a key framework for thinking about gender and thinking through the sources of gender (in)equality. As can be deduced from the discussions above, gender

inequalities are to be found in the everyday practices and process of our gendered lives, in the manner in which bodies are gendered, the gendered divisions of labor in the family and in work places, and in the normative values that are ingrained into social structures (Lorber, 2010). These values often serve to construct and maintain social status or to hold us accountable for our gendered performances.

Whilst ideas of gender as a practice and social structure are useful in thinking of women's relations to others, intersectionality is important in this thesis. Intersectionality, as a lens to think of women as doing gender in diverse ways and located in multiple ways within social structure becomes imperative in South Africa and the larger postcolonial world. The same importance is accorded postcolonial feminist thought. South Africa as a society with a history of colonialism and apartheid as well as contemporary hierarchies between races offers a unique set of circumstances for postcolonial interrogations of women's experiences.



2.3 Gender equality and/or gender justice

As outlined above, the main focus of this chapter is to review how notions of gender equality and gender justice have been understood and theorised in the literature. The terms gender equality and gender justice have both been deployed in literature. However, Goetz (2007) has argued that there is some debate about whether the concept of gender equality is better than gender justice. In this section, I briefly provide a definition of how gender equality will be employed in this study, before looking at some of the ways in which gender justice has been considered.

Within the South African legislative framework, the Constitution is unequivocal about gender equality. A significant piece of legislation that defines equality

and gives effect to the provisions of Section 9 of the Constitution – which deals with matters of discrimination – is the Promotion of Equality and the Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act, passed in 2000. The Equality Act, as it is called, defines equality to include “the full and equal enjoyment⁶ of rights and freedoms as contemplated in the Constitution and includes *de jure* and *de facto* equality and also equality in terms of outcomes” (Promotion of Equality and the Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act 4 of 2000, (RSA), p. 4). Within South Africa’s National Policy Framework for Women’s Empowerment and Gender Equality, gender equality “refers to a situation where women and men have equal conditions for realising their full human rights and potential; are able to contribute equally to national, political, economic, social and cultural development; and benefit equally from the results” (The Office of the Status of Women, n.d., n.p.). This definition of gender equality offers a working definition which will form the basis of how the concept will be used in this thesis.

In their work, some gender activists and academics have increasingly been using the notion of gender justice as opposed to gender equality or gender mainstreaming, arguing that the latter concepts fail to convey strongly and address the continued gender injustices that women experience in their lives (Goetz, 2007). The main argument is that gender equality and gender mainstreaming have failed to provide a clear way of redressing gender-based injustices, which women continue to suffer (Goetz, 2007). Yet, gender justice is difficult to define and can be approached from different schools of thought. These schools of thought range from philosophical perspectives focusing on rights, agency and capabilities; to the political perspectives where issues of democracy, constitutionalism and citizenship are at the core; to that of legal perspectives which take access to justice, judicial transformation and formal equal rights between men and women as central (Goetz, 2007; Kapur, 2007).

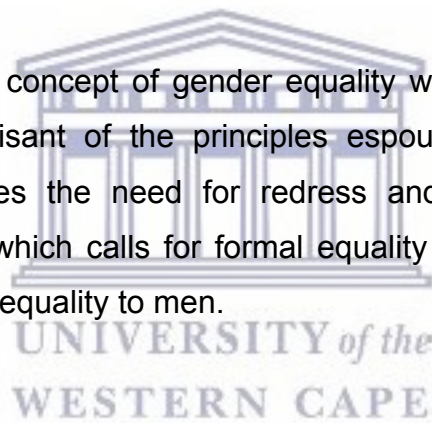
⁶ Jeremy Bentham, an English philosopher considered the founder of utilitarianism, viewed happiness as the subjective enjoyment of life (in Veenhoven, 2011).

Goetz (2007) advances a definition of gender justice that takes into consideration redress, restitution and accountability. Goetz (2007) argues that the concept gender justice is inherently political, and that it proposes principles about what is 'right' and 'good' in relationships among people, and how these outcomes may be achieved. She defines gender justice as "the ending of – and if necessary the provision of redress for – inequalities between women and men that result in women's subordination to men" (Goetz, 2007, p. 31). Gender justice, according to Goetz, thus entails access to and control over resources, combined with women's agency. In addition, it entails accountability i.e. women are able to hold those in power accountable for the decisions that they make that limit or prevent women from having access to resources, amongst others.

For Molyneux (2007) gender justice implies "a concept of justice pertaining to the social and juridical relations that prevails between the sexes" (p. 30). Gender justice encompasses different understandings of justice – from equality to differentiated equality (Molyneux, 2007). Differentiated equality refers to the respect for difference but with the qualification that equality remains as a core principle of justice, and that in the practice of the law, all persons are treated as moral equals (Molyneux, 2007). Gender justice thus implies full citizenship for women, that includes both ensuring equality between men and women, as well as redressing areas of inequality that are linked to historical inequalities. Gender justice thus takes the principle of equality further, and does not only refer to equaling the playing fields or balance but also speaks about redress. Proponents of gender justice have also argued that gender equality arguments have often been used in popular discourse as well as rationale in policy debates, to such an extent that men may benefit more. Arguments have been proposed that women have now benefitted sufficiently from gender equality, and that men and boys face "comparable injustices and oppressions as women and girls" and should be the recipients of gender equal efforts (Mills, 2003, p. 61).

Considering gender justice in sub-Saharan Africa, Nyamu-Musembi (2007) argues that there is no consensus among scholars regarding the relevance of the concept of gender in the African context, and thus the conceptualisation of gender informs the debates related to gender justice. Common understandings of gender justice include the fair treatment of men and women, fairness in interpersonal relations and institutions, recognition of the gender hierarchy that has disadvantaged women and that suggests that gender justice should favour women. In short, gender justice involves the transformation of societies, rather than only questioning the relationship between men and women, to make societies more just and equal. Gender justice also implies that women and men are treated as fully human (Mama, 2002; see also Nyamu-Musembi, 2007).

In this dissertation, the concept of gender equality will be used. However, I use this concept cognisant of the principles espoused by gender justice scholars, which includes the need for redress and acknowledgement of women's agency, and which calls for formal equality as well as substantive equality and not merely equality to men.



2.4 Postcolonial feminist framework and approaches to gender equality and gender justice

Conceptualisations of gender equality are derived from feminist theory. It is acknowledged that there is no one feminist theory. This study, as alluded to earlier, draws on postcolonial theory (as well as intersectionality) to understand women's experiences and perceptions of gender equality and happiness. Furthermore, in this section, I will draw on three approaches to gender justice which underpin this study.

2.4.1 Postcolonial feminist perspectives

Gqola (2001) has referred to postcoloniality as the “growing body of writing, literary and scholarly, which critiques the implications of the relationship of power between the former colonisers and the colonized” (p. 13). Postcolonial theory thus disrupts and contests the knowledge produced by the (former) colonisers, whilst acknowledging the effect and impact it may still have on the knowledge and culture of those formerly colonized. Postcolonial theory is also the critique “of the process of production of knowledge about the Other” (Chrisman & Williams, 1994, p. 8).

Postcolonial feminists, and black feminists in particular, have criticised western, white feminisms for assuming that all women face the same kind of oppression, and that women constitute a unitary group in anyway. In her seminal work, *‘Under western eyes: Feminist scholarship and colonial discourses’* (1988), Chandra Mohanty, critiques the work of western feminist scholars by arguing that a number of these writings ‘discursively colonize the material and historical heterogeneities of the lives of women in the third world, thereby producing/representing a composite, singular ‘third-world woman’ (Mohanty, 1988, p. 62) and thus, in effect, erasing the experiences of third-world women. In her critique of Western feminism, Mohanty choses to articulate the “material complexity, reality and agency of Third World women’s bodies and lives (Mohanty, 2003, p. 510).

The arguments made by Mohanty bolstered the emergence of postcolonial scholars challenging the flaws in western feminism and the lack of reflexivity, leading to a large body of postcolonial work. The past 30 years have seen a proliferation of theoretical and empirical work from a postcolonial feminist framework, which has taken the intersections of race, class, age and gender inequality into consideration, and which has documented how these complex intersectionalities shape the lived experiences of women (Crenshaw, 1997;

Hill Collins, 1990; hooks, 1995; King, 1997). It also bolstered the emergence of Third World and transnational feminisms. These feminisms emerged in critique of what was seen as a second wave, predominantly white, feminism. Third World and transnational feminisms recognise that women “face multiple and complex oppressions” (Herr, 2014, p. 2). The complex oppression that women experience is compounded by race, class, imperialism and colonialism (Herr, 2014, p. 2). It also recognises that in colonial regimes there are cases where white women gained from white colonial patriarchy more so than colonized black men.

It is because of the history of slavery, colonialism and apartheid that postcolonial feminists have argued that gender (in)equality and gender related harm cannot be considered without taking women’s (and men’s) multiple forms of oppression and power into account. Hence, models of gender equality within a postcolonial feminist framework consider the intersections of gender with race, class, age, culture, nationality, and other social categorisations. Postcolonial feminism takes into account black feminist arguments as well as queer theory and poststructuralism, to make arguments about how women’s oppressions are interwoven in the colonization and continues in the postcolony.

Policies and legislation thus need to take other inequalities, such as class, race, age, sexual orientation into account. Postcolonial feminist perspectives further imply that in thinking about women and happiness we cannot only think about gender but also of the colonial experiences of gender, as it shapes women’s notions of (in)equality and (un)happiness.

2.4.2 Theoretical framework on gender equality and justice

As far as specific theories addressing gender equality and justice are

concerned, the chapter foregrounds three influential ways of thinking about gender equality, which have been taken up in multilateral bodies such as the United Nations and different countries: (1) a theory of patriarchy in understanding gender (in)equality; (2) the human capabilities approach to gender equality and justice; and (3) the concepts of redistribution, recognition and representation in relation to gender equality and justice. In considering patriarchy, I draw strongly on the work of Sylvia Walby, since she offers an expedient view of gender equality, which also speaks to the practicality of gender equality – meaning how we ‘do’ gender equality – in women’s everyday private and public lives. This is useful within the context of this study, as I consider how women speak of gender equality and happiness within their everyday lives.

Amartya Sen, Martha Nussbaum and Ingrid Robeyns and others offer a framework – the human capabilities approach – in which gender justice or equality can be achieved. The capabilities framework offers a practical approach to analysing gender equality and happiness in this study. Nussbaum extends this approach by offering a flexible list of capabilities that should be achieved if gender equality is to be in place. This list of capabilities will be used to analyse how women interviewed in this study speak of their everyday lives and their experiences of gender (in)equality and justice. The capability list will also be used to ascertain what policy measures have been set in place by the State, in an attempt to achieve some measures of gender equality. Nancy Fraser’s theory of redistribution, recognition and representation is presented next, since she provides a useful lens to assess progress in the three areas in achieving gender justice and gender equality. Fraser contends that gender justice and gender equality cannot be achieved without considering the distribution of resources, cultural redress and political representation, the latter considering who can lay claim to gender justice.

2.4.2.1 Patriarchy in understanding gender (in)equality

Sylvia Walby is one of the foremost feminists who have thought and engaged with the theory of gender equality, through the deployment of the concept of patriarchy. Walby (1990) argued that patriarchy was essential in analysing gender inequality and, expanding on her earlier definition of patriarchy, posited that patriarchy is “a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women” (Walby, 1990, p. 20). She proposed a model of contemporary patriarchy, which identifies six structures or sites where women are exploited: paid work (paid employment), domestic work, violence, sexuality, the state, and culture. The six structures interact with each other and have an effect on each other.

The first structure – paid employment – sees women being exploited in the workplace. Walby noted continued unequal wages between men and women as shown by research. In addition, certain jobs are seen as being reserved for men as they require – according to the patriarchal institutions – different skills, which women ‘do not necessarily have’. The second structure is that of domestic work. Here Walby argues that women are exploited in the household. Women undertake labour, which largely goes unrecognised as valuable and contributing work. Today, women and men often do not spend equal amounts of time on duties within the household. The third patriarchal structure is violence, which Walby argued is mostly perpetrated by men on women. In South Africa research shows that men’s violence is perpetrated on both women and men (Seedat, van Niekerk, Jewkes, Suffla & Ratele, 2009). The fourth structure refers to sexuality. Walby (1990) maintained that “compulsory heterosexuality and the sexual double standards” are two key systems that characterise this structure (p. 21). The fifth structure where women are exploited is the state, which continues to act in a patriarchal manner towards women. State patriarchy is seen in policies and legislation of the state. It is also seen in the manner survivors of violence are treated in courts. The sixth structure culture, constitutes a number of institutions, which

according to Walby (1990) continue with discriminatory practices against women. These would include religious organisations, the education sector, and media, amongst others.

In 2009, Walby further expanded on her theory of patriarchy by advancing a model of analysing gender relations. Her model contains and builds on the elements as seen in her theory of patriarchy. Arguing that gender has the features of a system, a gender regime, she maintains that the gender regime is “a system of gender relations which is analytically separate from other regimes of inequality” (Walby, 2009, p. 259). The model claims that there are different forms and varieties of gender regimes. It distinguishes between the domestic and public arena (forms). She further argues that the variety of gender regimes differs: on the one-hand social democratic gender regimes and on the other neoliberal gender regimes, which are characterised by more unequal, less democratic elements.

As noted above, Walby (1990) had identified six structures where patriarchy and gender inequality play themselves out. In 2009, she shifted from six structures to four domains. The domains are economy; polity (which includes the state, transnational bodies such as the United Nations and European Union, and organised religion); violence (which include gender-based violence, the army and the military); and civil society (including sexuality, social movements, knowledge institutions). Walby (2009) further contends that gender relations can be different at the micro (individual, family), meso (community) and macro levels (state, global), which vary within the four domains. Walby’s work indicates that gender regimes are not static. They can morph and have changed over time and societies. This change has come about because of the influence of social movements, international agreements, global institutions, etc., a point already suggested in *Gender transformations* (Walby, 1997).

In sum, Walby's model of analysing gender relations firstly identifies different forms (public and domestic) and varieties (social democratic and neoliberal) of gender regime. Secondly, it states that gender relations (and gender) can be constituted in four domains or arenas (economic, policy, violence, civil society). Thirdly, it states that gender relations can differ at the micro, meso and macro levels. Walby's theory of patriarchy, and in particular the six structures in which patriarchy plays itself out and where women are exploited, provides a lens which I use in understanding how women speak about gender (in)equality in this study. I use Walby's theory of patriarchy as part of the analytical framework in understanding the different sites of women's exploitation and where they experience gender (in)equality.

2.4.2.2 Human capabilities approach to gender justice

In this section, I consider the work of Amartya Sen, the initial proponent of the capabilities approach, and other key theorists such as the work of Martha Nussbaum and others who expand on Sen's framework. I now turn to work that focuses more generally on justice as it provides a different entry point to gender justice. This scholarship has been found particularly helpful by feminists in thinking through how to approach gender justice both theoretically and practically.

Sen (1980, 1982, 1992, 1999) and Nussbaum (1997, 2000, 2003, 2004) have argued that traditional theories of justice are inadequate, especially when considering matters of gender justice. Sen and Nussbaum have contended that a capabilities approach provides for a more holistic and better understanding of justice than the social contract theory of justice, and those of utility (preferences) and growth. This is a key reason why the capabilities approach is considered here. GDP or growth of countries has proved ineffective as an indicator of how people are doing in a country (and as will be discussed in Chapter Three, is not effective when considering the individual's

happiness) (see the Human Development Reports; Nussbaum, 2003; Sen, 1999). Nussbaum (2003) argues that using growth as an indicator of quality of life fails to take into account how poor people are doing or how women are doing, as women and the poor are often not the beneficiaries of a nation's prosperity. As will be discussed in Chapter Three, utility or preferred preference has also been studied as an indicator of well-being. Sen (1995) has criticised utility theories as being inadequate, by arguing that women regularly demonstrate "adaptive preferences", referring to preferences which they have adapted, based on their status as second-class citizens. To put it simply, women thus have lower expectations than men (as do working class people compared to middle class, and so on). Given that women's choices are often limited, and that they have not been exposed to the same opportunities as men, asking them about their expectations and desires (preferences) seems unfair, as it would be difficult to long for something that you do not believe is a possibility, or to long for something other than what you know – you would not know anything different (Sen, 1992, 1993, 1995). "Thus, the utilitarian framework, which asks people what they currently prefer and how satisfied they are, proves inadequate to confront the most pressing issues of gender justice" (Nussbaum, 2003, p. 34). Traditional theories of justice, taking resources, income and growth into account, are thus inadequate when looking at gender justice, as they fail to take into account what matters intrinsically i.e. as they argue, functionings and capabilities. Income is only a means, way or process to well-being, not well-being itself (Robeyns, 2003; Sen, 1992).

Nussbaum (2003) contends that an adequate theory of gender justice is only possible if a set of fundamental entitlements is proclaimed that are independent of people's preferences, which are often shaped and influenced by their unjust backgrounds or conditions (including socio-economic). Both Sen and Nussbaum thus propose the capabilities approach, which takes into consideration what people are able to do and to be. The capability approach is a normative framework for the evaluation and assessment of well-being of

individuals, assessment and design of policies and proposals for social change in society (Robeyns, 2005).

Central to Sen's capability approach is the notion of functionings. According to Sen (1993), "functionings represents parts of the state of a person – in particular the various things that he or she manages to do or be in leading a life" (p. 31). Functionings also reflects the various things that a person may value doing or being (Sen, 1999). Capability refers to the "alternative combinations of functionings the person can achieve, and from which he or she can choose one collection" (Sen, 1999, p. 31). Capabilities also refer to the freedom that an individual has to achieve various lifestyles (Sen, 1999, 2009). Capability and freedom are integrally linked. Functionings include adequate nutrition, good health, achieving self-respect, whereas capabilities would refer to the "ability to be well nourished, escaping avoidable premature mortality and morbidity" (Sen, 1993, p. 31). Robeyns (2003) offers a simple explanation of the difference between functionings and capabilities citing the example of an outcome (functioning) and an opportunity (capability) or an achievement (functioning), and the freedom to achieve something (capability). She goes further stating, "All capabilities together correspond to the overall freedom to lead the life that a person has reason to value" (Robeyns, 2003, p. 63). Or alternatively put, freedom helps advance the capabilities of an individual person (Sen 1999, 2009).

The capability approach, as indicated above, is concerned with functionings and capabilities. This does not mean that income or resources are not important. However, they are not important in themselves, but in what their characteristics enable individuals to generate from these goods, resources or income (Robeyns, 2008). The extent to which individuals can generate capabilities from these resources are dependent on how easily the conversion to capabilities can be made. Three conversion factors can be identified, namely social, environmental and personal. The social factors refer to the

societal aspects such as social institutions (e.g. political system, educational system, family), social norms (including gender norms, cultural norms), traditions and behaviours of others in society (racism, sexism, homophobia (Robeyns, 2008). The environmental factors refer to matters such as extreme weather conditions that could affect one's shelter and security, amongst others; whilst the personal factors refer to one's mental and physical state (Robeyns, 2008).

Sen has argued that equality is central to women's endeavor for social justice. He has further posited that some arrangements in society are unjust – by implication stating that gender inequality is unjust – and therefore that unjust practices can be explained through theories of justice (Sen, 1995). Unjust social arrangements, such as gender inequality, are often tolerated, and bolstered or sustained by practices that are considered 'natural' or 'appropriate' (Sen, 1995). This can be seen in the unequal treatment of girls and boys in families, which, as Sen (1995) has argued, are carried out through the activities of women themselves. Examples cited by Sen include provision of better or more health care for boys as opposed to girls, and the nutritional needs of boys being placed above that of girls, amongst others (Sen, 1995).

As indicated above, Sen (1992, 1995, 1999) argues that the capabilities approach provides the best framework for understanding gender inequality. According to Sen (1992), "the question of gender inequality ... can be understood much better by comparing those things that intrinsically matter (such as functionings and capabilities), rather than just the means [to achieve them] like... resources. The issue of gender inequality is ultimately one of disparate freedoms" (p. 125). For Sen, the capabilities approach is inextricably linked to freedom – the freedom to "achieve in general and the capabilities to function in particular (especially when assessing freedoms to pursue well-being)" (Sen, 1995, p. 266). Human capabilities, argues Sen, are

a key part of individual freedom (Sen, 1993). An individual's capability set mirrors the freedom that that individual has to lead different types of life (Sen, 1993).

Sen does not express himself clearly on what minimum capabilities need to be in place for social justice to be achieved (Nussbaum, 2003; Robeyns, 2003). Robeyns (2003) has however argued that one definitive list of capabilities is not needed if using Sen's capability approach as a framework. This is in contrast to Nussbaum who has argued for a definitive list. The argument posited by Sen is that each capability is context specific, and that the application of the capabilities approach would entail developing its own list. Furthermore, the identification of capabilities should be a democratic process (see Robeyns, 2003). Nussbaum (1999, 2003) sets out a clear list of capabilities that should be considered as minimum for social justice to be achieved. She contends that such is a list is necessary as a "comparative quality-of-life measurement and for the formulation of basic political principles of the sort that can play a role in fundamental constitutional guarantees" (Nussbaum, 2003, p. 40). This list of central human capabilities is discussed later in this section.

The human capabilities approach is not concerned with how satisfied a person is, or how many resources they have. Instead, it is concerned with questions of, "What is she actually able to do and to be?" (Nussbaum, 1999). Nussbaum has argued that women, often because of their gender, have not lived lives that are fully human, as women's dignity is habitually violated (1999). Women face daily inequalities in health, education, nutrition, employment, security and care. By proposing a list of fundamental entitlements and capabilities, the capabilities approach takes the challenges faced by women in particular into account. Nussbaum further argues that there is a threshold level for each capability, and that to ensure that the goal of social justice is reached, each citizen should surpass this threshold. The

capabilities approach is not concerned with only ensuring that the basic threshold is met. In order for social justice goals to be reached, women should be able to live flourishing lives. This is central to their well-being. If the bare minimum of the capability is reached, it falls short, according to Nussbaum, of being a good human life.

To flourish, as alluded to above, is about more than just surviving. Flourishing is integral to gender equality, gender justice and women's happiness. To flourish means, "to live within an optimal range of human functioning, one that connotes goodness, generativity, growth and resilience" (Frederickson & Losada, 2005, p. 678). Flourishing is a positive emotion and thus a positive affect. It describes positive mental health and denotes, according to Keyes (2002), the presence of mental health. This is in contrast to the absence of mental health or languishing. The reader will recall that positive affect, as well as negative affect and life satisfaction, are part of the overall definition of happiness. Women should be able to live flourishing and thus happy lives. This is where public policy and other enablers such as legislation come into play. The state has a role to play in ensuring that women, and men, live flourishing lives, through introducing policy and legislation that creates the space for individuals to surpass the basic threshold of each capability, and live lives in which they can exercise and enjoy their rights.

Nussbaum lists ten central human capabilities (1999, 2003): life; bodily health; bodily integrity; senses, imagination and thought; emotions; practical reason; affiliation; other species; play; and control over one's environment⁷.

⁷ No one capability will be focussed on. Given the qualitative nature of this study, I will explore how the participants speak about gender equality and happiness in relation to the ten central human capabilities defined by Nussbaum.

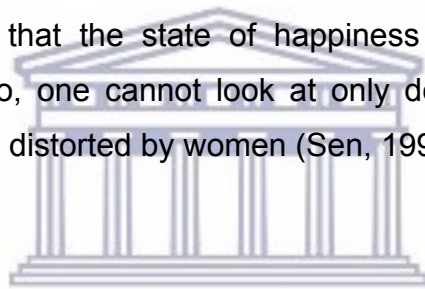
Life refers to not dying prematurely but living to the end of a human life of normal length. Bodily health encompasses good health, including reproductive health, adequate nourishment and having adequate shelter. Bodily integrity refers to the freedom of movement, to be secure from violence assault – including sexual assault and domestic violence – having chances for sexual satisfaction and for having choices in matters related to reproduction. Senses, imagination and thought refers to the ability to use one’s senses, imagination, thinking and reasoning abilities. As Nussbaum argues, education, literacy and basic mathematical and scientific training inform this. The capability of sense, imagination and thought further includes freedom of speech, expression, religious affiliation, the ability to have pleasurable experiences and to “avoid nonbeneficial pain” (2003, p. 41). Emotions include the ability to form attachments to things and people other than oneself, the ability to love those who love and care for us, and the ability to grieve for others in their absence. Nussbaum argues that it is important not to have one’s emotional development affected by fear and anxiety. Practical reason refers to “being able to form a conception of the good and to engage in critical reflection about the planning of one’s life” (2003, p. 41). Affiliation entails “being able to live with and towards others, to recognize and show concern for other human beings and to engage in various forms of social interaction; to be able to imagine the situation of another” (Nussbaum, 2003, p. 41). It further encompasses self-respect and non-humiliation. It thus includes non-discrimination on the basis of sex/gender, race, sexual orientation, caste, ethnicity, religion and national origin (Nussbaum, 2003, p. 42). Other species depicts showing concern for animals, plants, nature. Play indicates being capable of laughing, playing and engaging in leisure activities. Control over one’s environment describes two aspects within this capability. The first refers to the political and the ability to participate in political choices affecting one’s life, including political participation and free speech and association. The second refers to material aspects. This includes the ability to own property, having equal access to property rights, the ability to seek employment on an equal basis as others, and having the freedom from unjustified search and seizure.

The capability approach is not only concerned with the well-being of individuals, but recognises that women's agency is central to the attainment of goals and values that she has reason to pursue and which might not be linked to her own well-being. Sen (1992) has referred to this as agency achievement. The capabilities approach sees people not as passive recipients or spectators but as active participants, and as active agents in bringing about social transformation and justice in the lives of women and men. Nussbaum (1999) posits that all people have the ability to make choices, irrespective of their conditions and circumstances. Well-being and agency are distinct aspects of a person, yet are inextricably linked and intersect (Sen, 1999). Agency is central to seeing people as responsible persons - who act or who choose not to act (Sen, 1999). A person who has agency furthermore can pursue or decide not to pursue their goals that they value. A person who does not have agency is someone who is forced to do something or who is oppressed (Alkire & Deneulin, 2009). We have seen the importance of women's agency for their well-being in many instances in civil society women's movements and in government. In South Africa, for example, the women's movement as part of the national democratic struggle was instrumental in ensuring that a significant number of women were elected into the first democratic government. So too, through women's voice and agency, we have seen a number of progressive legislations being introduced, amongst others the Choice on Termination of Pregnancy Act, the Domestic Violence Act and the Sexual Offences Act. All these pieces of legislation have a significant impact on the well-being of women, and strive to improve the well-being of women. Women's agency not only has a positive impact on the well-being of women, but also on the well-being of men, children, the family, community, workplace and country too.

Sen (2009) ponders the question of whether happiness is sufficient in judging an individual's well-being. He also considers the question of whether happiness and capability are linked. It is argued that happiness and capability differ significantly in that capability imposes certain obligations on individuals,

whereas happiness does not result in any obligations on the part of the individual (Sen, 2009). Obligation is an important aspect of justice.

As will be argued in Chapter Three on happiness, many economists argue that happiness can be used as a sole measure to evaluate human well-being. That happiness is an important aspect of human well-being is not disputed. Sen (2009) does not question the central role that happiness plays in human well-being, rather he questions (welfare) economists' view that everything other than happiness is insignificant to human well-being. Whilst happiness is an important human functioning, happiness cannot be the only thing that we value (Sen, 2009). Sen has argued that the capability approach, as opposed to the utility based approaches, does not insist that one must value only happiness, but argues that the state of happiness is one amongst other objects of value. So too, one cannot look at only desire fulfillment, as this desire fulfillment is often distorted by women (Sen, 1993).



Sen (2009) takes issue with arguments made by, amongst others, Layard (2005), who argues that happiness is self-evidently good, and argues that far more reasoned arguments need to be put forward. Sen, as indicated before, has argued that individuals often adapt to their conditions and accept their deprivation to make life more bearable, without the deprivation going away. Sen states that Layard argues against doing good for others if they do not see it as being good for themselves, as this is paternalistic, as individuals should ultimately know what is good for themselves. Happiness further relates to our achievement or failure to achieve certain objectives. Achieving certain functionings might thus result in happiness. However, adaptation to continued deprivation plays a significant part in perpetuating certain inequalities, amongst other, inequalities experienced by women. Others such as Alkire and Deneulin (2009) have further argued that the focus on happiness may hide other factors, such as not being able to track the things that people really value, it might not bring to the fore the deprivations that people may suffer,

and lastly, that self-reported happiness may often be biased by information and social circumstances.

One of the strengths of the capability approach is that functionings and capabilities are concerned with the individual. In evaluating and assessing well-being, it focusses on individual well-being as opposed to the well-being of the family or the community (Robeyns, 2003). This is particularly valuable to feminist researchers, who have argued that one cannot look at the well-being of the family and make assumptions about the well-being of a woman in the family, in other words, intra-household inequalities are not taken into account (Robeyns, 2003). The capability approach however recognises that individual functionings and capabilities are not independent of the actions of others or the concern for others (Robeyns, 2003).

A second strength of the capability approach, as argued by Robeyns, is that it takes what people are able to do into account in both the market and non-market settings. It thus would not only look at functionings and capabilities in the workplace, earnings and income, but also take well-being in other areas such as care work, household labour, freedom from domestic violence, amongst others, into account (Robeyns, 2003). It thus uses a multi-dimensional metric of justice to assess well-being (Robeyns, 2009). In effect, it provides a more holistic approach to well-being. The third strength of the capability approach is that it takes into consideration the heterogeneity of people. People are diverse on the basis of gender, race, class, age and sexuality, and may have different physical and mental abilities, as well as different care responsibilities (Robeyns, 2003). This strength is of particular importance to feminist researchers who have argued that women are not a homogenous group. The weakness of capability approach lies in its vulnerability to “androcentric interpretations and applications” (Robeyns, 2003). In assessing the well-being of individuals, the capability approach uses and endorses, as argued by Robeyns (2003), a particular social theory.

Depending on the social theory employed, researchers may come to different conclusions about gender (in)equality in capabilities. Specific criticism has been leveled against Nussbaum. Nussbaum's capability approach has been criticised for being too prescriptive – given the list of capabilities - and that the list of capabilities is not informed by vigorous, democratic procedures or discussion (Robeyns, 2003). Nussbaum has also received criticism from Phillips (2001) who argues that the capabilities approach has a neoliberal agenda, not taking into account the significant challenges that are faced in the struggle for equality – the struggles for equality between men and women, as well as across social groups within and across nation-states.

While Sen has argued that a capability approach is most appropriate framework for understanding gender equality, he does not indicate which capabilities are best suited for this purpose. While Robeyns (2003), as noted above, has indicated her support for Sen's capability approach and has indicated that a definitive list of capabilities is not needed, she has argued for the need to identify those capabilities that would be important in assessing gender inequality; for a decision to be made on whether gender inequality is assessed in terms of functionings or capabilities and how to weight different functionings and capabilities.

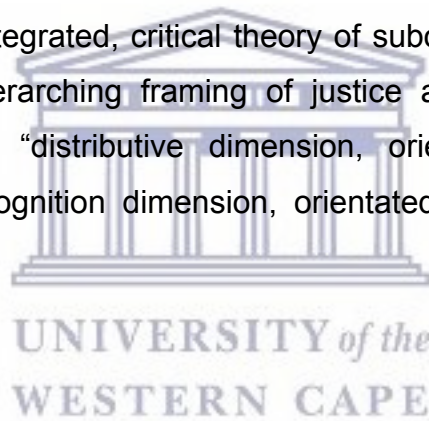
Robeyns (2003, 2010) has proposed a procedural approach for identifying and selecting capabilities, which is imperative in conceptualising and addressing gender inequality. The list of capabilities identified includes “life and physical health, mental well-being, bodily integrity and safety, social relations and support, political empowerment, education and knowledge, domestic work and non-market-care, paid work and other projects, shelter and the environment, mobility, leisure activities, time-autonomy, respect and religion” (Robeyns, 2003, pp. 71-72). She argues that this does not detract from Sen's capability approach. There are similarities proposed in the lists of Nussbaum and Robeyns. However, Robeyns recognises that control over

time, including how time is spent (on amongst leisure activities) and how time is used, is important in conceptualising gender equality. Societies can be gender equal just if three principles are met: (1) women and men should have the same capabilities set; (2) men and women should not be constrained in their choice of capability sets because of gender; and (3) the rewards of the different options in the capability set need to be justified and not be gender biased (Robeyns, 2010).

This study finds resonance in the human capabilities approach proposed by Sen (1995, 1999, 2009) and Nussbaum (1999, 2000, 2003, 2009). Nussbaum offers a comprehensive list of fundamental entitlements that should be available in order for women to achieve equality and social justice. The list of capabilities does not prioritise one capability over another. Nor does it mean that should one capability be achieved that there is no need to achieve another. No one capability thus takes precedence over the other. States thus cannot expect to prioritise one capability over the other and then expect that they would have facilitated gender equality. All capabilities need to be achieved for women to have achieved gender equality. The capabilities approach is furthermore a framework with much flexibility. As argued by Nussbaum (2003), it is a list that allows other capabilities to be introduced. Certainly, a capabilities approach can be used to understand gender (in)equality alongside that of other perspectives, such as Fraser (1998, 2000), who recognises that social justice needs to take into consideration the redistribution of resources, recognition of cultural differences and political representation. This is supported by Robeyns (2003, 2010) who has argued that an analysis of gender inequality should not consider the gender inequalities in functionings and capabilities only. It should also analyse the inequalities in resources that cause gender inequalities in capabilities and functionings.

2.4.2.3 Redistribution, recognition and representation in relation to gender justice

In her earlier work Fraser (1995, 1998, 2000) argues against a one-dimensional view of justice, and proposes a new critical conceptual framework of justice that links the “social theoretical analysis of subordination to a moral-philosophical account of injustice” (Fraser, 2007b, p. 305). She contends that social justice theories of the time could be divided into two types: theories calling for the redistribution of resources and goods; and those calling for the recognition of cultural difference. These theories, in essence, were pitted against each other, polarising the arguments and forcing one to choose either between the distribution of resources (class politics) or that of recognition (identity politics) (Fraser, 1998, p. 1). Fraser (1995, 1998) made the argument for an emancipatory, integrated, critical theory of subordination and injustice, which provided an overarching framing of justice as two-dimensional i.e. encompassing both a “distributive dimension, orientated towards class inequalities, and a recognition dimension, orientated to status hierarchies” (Fraser, 2007b, p. 305).

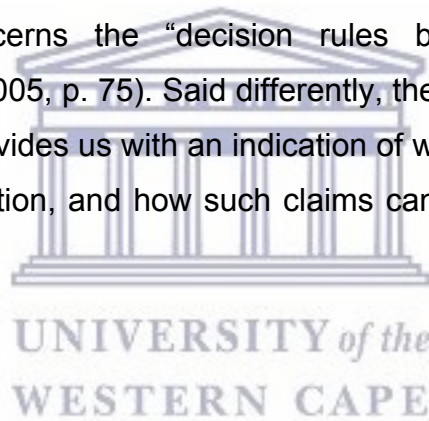


In her later works Fraser (2005) argues for a three-dimensional or trivalent view of justice, encompassing the “political dimension of representation alongside the economic dimension of distribution and the cultural dimension of recognition” (Fraser 2005, p. 73), orientated to the norm of participatory parity. I will now discuss Fraser’s three-dimensional framing of justice.

According to Fraser, justice implies participatory parity. “Justice requires social arrangements that permit all to participate as peers in social life. Overcoming injustice means dismantling institutionalized obstacles that prevent some people from participating on par with others as full partners in social interaction” (2005, p. 73). People can be prevented from participating

as peers due to economic structures. In such cases, individuals and groups experience “distributive injustice or maldistribution” (Fraser, 2005, p. 73). People can also suffer from status inequality or misrecognition when they are prevented from participating as peers when “institutional hierarchies of cultural values” (Fraser, 2005, p. 73) deny them the necessary recognition.

Fraser says that processes of globalisation affect justice. This has led to her expanded vision of justice, and the addition of a third dimension – the political. The political dimension of justice is primarily concerned with representation. According to Fraser (2005), there can be ‘no redistribution or recognition without representation’ (p. 79). The political dimension encompasses two elements. The first concerns the nature of the state’s dominion or jurisdiction, and the second concerns the “decision rules by which it structures contestation” (Fraser, 2005, p. 75). Said differently, the political is about social belonging, and thus provides us with an indication of who can make claims for distribution and recognition, and how such claims can be made and decided upon.



How does Fraser’s theory of justice articulate with the different conceptualisations of gender? Fraser (1998, 2007a) argues that gender holds both an economic and cultural dimension. Gender injustices can only be addressed through redressing distributive injustices (distribution) and through recognition. The economic structure of society is gendered. The gendering of the economy is two-fold, as Fraser (1998) argues. Firstly, there is a structural division of labour between “productive” labour and “unproductive” or domestic labour. Women carry the burden of domestic labour. Secondly, within the paid labour market, gender divisions are seen in higher paid male dominated sectors and lower paid female dominated sectors (Fraser, 1998).

Viewed from a recognition dimension, gender is a status differentiation (Fraser, 1998). For Fraser (1998) androcentricism is a significant feature of gender injustices. Androcentricism here refers to “the authoritative construction of norms that privilege traits associated with masculinity and the pervasive devaluation and disparagement of things coded as feminine” (Fraser, 1998, p. 2). She further contends that when androcentric norms are institutionalised, women suffer status injustices, which includes domestic violence, sexual harassment, sexual assault, objectification, exclusion and marginalisation in the public arena.

Fraser thus argues that gender is two-dimensional or bifocal (2007a). She contends that feminist theories need to move away from the view of gender as a labour-centred problem (socialist-feminist theories) and the theories that are culture-centred (post-Marxist feminist theories). The argument put forward by Fraser is that gender needs to be viewed simultaneously to its affinities with class and status. Gender thus simultaneously has a political-economic perspective (redistribution), as well as a cultural-discursive perspective (recognition). Whilst these two perspectives are relatively independent of each other, they are also intertwined and interact with each other (Fraser, 2007a). Again, as Fraser has argued, gender injustices cannot be addressed by focusing on one dimension only. In other words, the wage gap cannot be addressed through distribution only. The status attached to women’s work should also be addressed. In other words, women’s work should be valued as productive work and the necessary status accorded to it.

The two-dimensional gender perspective complements Fraser’s view of justice. At the centre of the notion of justice and gender, is Fraser’s principle of participatory parity. Two conditions are necessary for participatory parity. According to Fraser (2007a), the first condition pertains to the distribution of material resources, which has to ensure that participants have and maintain independence and “voice” (p. 27). She argues that precluded from this are

“social arrangements that institutionalize deprivation, exploitation, and gross disparities in wealth, income, and leisure time, thereby denying some people the means and opportunities to interact with others as peers” (Fraser, 2007a, p. 27). The second condition necessary for participatory parity is “intersubjective.” Here, Fraser contends that institutionalised patterns of cultural value should “express equal respect for all participants and ensure equal opportunity for achieving social esteem” (2007a, p. 27). Participatory parity thus does not exist in instances where institutionalised value patterns “deny some people the status of full partners in interaction—whether by burdening them with excessive ascribed “difference” or by failing to acknowledge their distinctiveness” (Fraser, 2007a, p. 27).

As discussed above, gender injustices cannot only be addressed through economic or cultural redress, in other words, through only redistribution or recognition. It requires a two-dimensional perspective of gender and possibly a trivalent view of justice, underpinned by participatory parity. Fraser’s trivalent view of justice furthermore provides an essential lens through which to understand and analyse participants’ experiences and perceptions of happiness, and as I will show later, happiness cannot be viewed in isolation from redress and recognition.

2.5 Conclusion

This study is firmly located within a feminist, social constructionist, postcolonial framework. In addition, given my positionality as a black feminist, I consider an intersectional approach imperative in this study. An intersectional approach takes into account that gender equality and happiness cannot be studied in the global South without the recognition of how gender, race, class and age (amongst other identity markers) intersect and influence women’s experiences of gender equality and happiness.

As shown in this chapter, one's understanding of gender underpins the specific gender equality theories drawn on. This study draws on social constructionist theories of gender, which regards gender as a social structure of relations and as an everyday, routine performance. This conceptualisation of gender has informed the definition of gender equality that is employed in this study. As conceptualised here, gender equality (which is also used interchangeably with gender justice) is about ensuring that women and men have the same conditions under which to fulfill their potential and enjoy their full human rights, whilst contributing equally to political, economic, social and cultural developments, and equally reaping the rewards of such developments. When gender equality is defined as such, the usefulness of and the alignment with both the human capabilities approach – with its emphasis on freedoms and opportunities – and the redistribution, recognition and political theory, becomes evident. This definition also finds resonance in the theory of patriarchy as proposed by Walby, which is valuable in understanding how gender (in)equality is played out or performed in women's everyday lives. In summation, this chapter looked at: (i) the constructions of gender; (ii) how gender equality and gender justice are understood in this study; and (iii) feminist frameworks of gender equality and gender justice. The next chapter provides the framing of happiness in this study and draws on theories of happiness within interdisciplinary fields, spanning economics as well as psychology.

Chapter Three: Theorising happiness

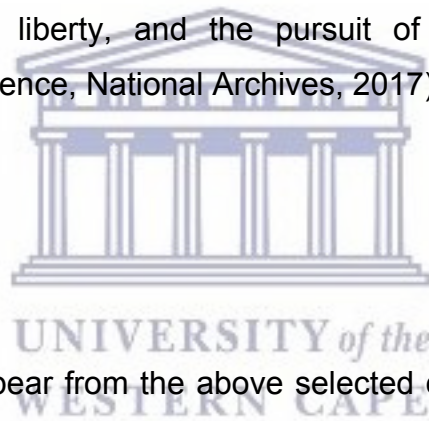
“Everybody wants to be happy. There is probably no other goal in life that commands such a high level of consensus” (Frey & Stutzer, 2002a, p. vii).

“It really does not need to be proved that most people, perhaps all people, want to be happy” (Argyle, 2001, p. 1).

“The State shall strive to promote those conditions that will enable the pursuit of Gross National Happiness” (The Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan, Article 9, Royal Audit Authority, 2016).

“We hold these truths to be self-evident – that all men [sic] are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” (American Declaration of Independence, National Archives, 2017).

3.1 Introduction



Happiness, it would appear from the above selected quotations, is universal, what everybody wants, and something good. From the literature, happiness studies is evidently inter-disciplinary – being studied in sociology, theology, economics, psychology and philosophy. Early studies on happiness date back to Aristotle, who made pronouncements on happiness and the Good Life (Kashdan, Biswas-Diener & King, 2008). In contemporary times, happiness studies have received prominence in the scholarship undertaken by positive psychologists such as Seligman (2002), Keyes (2002), Wissing (2014), as well as scholars, including Ahmed (2007/88) and Clough (2007) who foreground the affective turn, with an emphasis on embodiment and emotion.

As this study is located within a postcolonial framework, drawing on intersectionality, the material realities of women are important. It is for this

reason that I draw on literature and research by economists, which looks at relationships between the economy and happiness. In addition, I centre research which had been regarded as key to happiness studies but has in recent years come under scrutiny. Here I refer to the hedonic treadmill theory and social comparison theory.

This chapter sets out to do the following: First, I present how happiness has been conceptualised in happiness studies. Secondly, I turn to the economic-based research on happiness and consider the theory of Relative Standards, which includes the hedonic treadmill and social comparison theory. Material life circumstances and its links to happiness are considered in section 3.4. Lastly, section 3.5 discusses feminist critiques of the concept of happiness and happiness studies as a research field, and briefly considers discourses on affect from a critical feminist perspective.

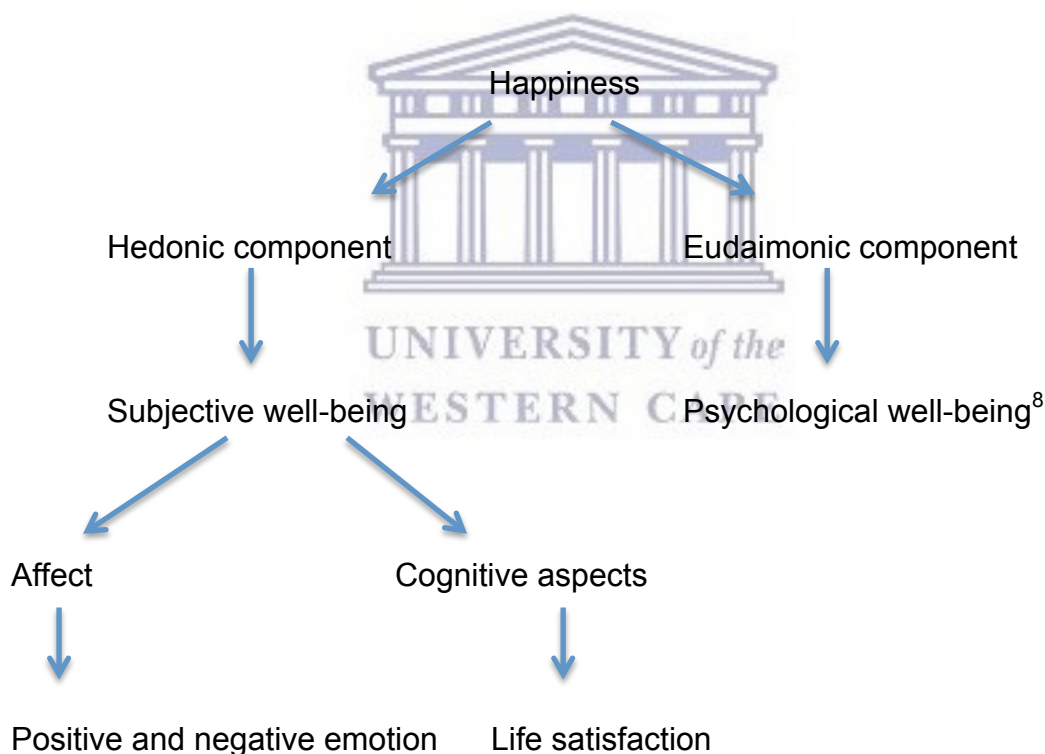
3.2 Defining happiness

Well-being researchers have traditionally focused on two aspects of happiness, namely, hedonic happiness and eudaimonic happiness (Kashdan, Biswas-Diener & King, 2008). The eudaimonic component focuses on “meaning, purpose, expression of potential, being involved with something larger than life” whereas the hedonic component of happiness focuses on “enjoyment, pleasure, satisfaction and comfort” (Wissing, 2014, p.7).

Frey and Stutzer (2002a) have argued that there are two components to hedonic happiness (or subjective well-being), namely cognition and affect. The Happiness Report (Helliwell, Layard & Sachs, 2012) supports this argument.

Affect, as postulated by happiness scholars (as opposed to affect which focusses on the body, and which is discussed later in this chapter), refers to “moods or emotions” (Frey & Stutzer, 2002a, p. 11), or as Sachs (2012, p. 6) have stated, the “ups and downs of daily emotions”. Cognition, on the other hand, is considered as “the rational or intellectual aspects of well-being”, which involves making judgements and comparisons (Frey & Stutzer, 2002a, p. 11). Cognition is usually measured or assessed as satisfaction or “an individual’s overall evaluation of life” (Sachs, 2012, p. 6). In Figure 1, I present a diagrammatic conceptualisation of happiness as discussed in literature.

Figure 1: Diagrammatic representation of happiness



In the literature, the concept of happiness has been used interchangeably with well-being, quality of life, subjective well-being, life satisfaction, or utility (see Helliwell, Layard & Sachs, 2012; Kashdan, Biswas-Diener & King, 2008;

⁸ Refers to mental health, meaning (in daily life, life events, inter-personal relations), self-actualisation, personal growth.

Veenhoven, 2004). This interchangeable use of the concept will further be noted in the research presented throughout this chapter and study. Whilst this interchangeable use of the concepts was to become problematic later on in the collection of the qualitative data and the analyses of the quantitative data, and I had to be more specific with my use of the construct happiness, I began by using the different constructs of happiness interchangeably. Perhaps it is for reasons, such as which I have now noted, that Diener and Ryan (2009) have argued against the use of happiness as a construct, stating that happiness, a popular term, has mostly been used by psychologists, and that “subjective well-being is an umbrella term used to describe the level of well-being people experience according to their subjective evaluations of their lives” (p. 391).

In this study, the initial focus was on the cognitive component of happiness. As a working definition of the cognitive component of happiness, I employed the definition proposed by Veenhoven, who defines happiness as the “overall enjoyment of your life as-a-whole” (Veenhoven, 2004, p. 6). In other words, I took happiness to mean life satisfaction. (Later on in the quantitative results chapter and the concluding chapter I use the concept happiness-as-life-satisfaction). However, as it becomes clearer in later chapters, this conceptualisation of happiness as life satisfaction becomes constraining for women in this study. As will be seen in Chapter Six in reporting on the quantitative results, it was necessary to draw a distinction between the affective components of happiness and the cognitive component. For reporting purposes, I thus referred to the affective component as happiness-as-affect and the cognitive component as happiness-as-life-satisfaction.

By focusing on one aspect of happiness research (the cognitive aspects), I was following in the footsteps of numerous scholars who have studied happiness by focusing on either the hedonic or the eudaimonic components (Seligman, 2002; Waterman, 1993; Waterman, Schwartz & Conti, 2008). This approach has however been criticised for drawing too sharp a distinction

between different types of happiness (Kashdan, Biswas-Diener & King, 2008). As Kashdan, Biswas-Diener and King (2008) have argued, there is considerable conceptual overlap between eudaimonia and hedonia, and thus distinguishing in this manner is problematic. They further argue that eudaimonia is not well defined, and measurement of eudaimonia has varied, providing little consistency in measurement (Kashdan, Biswas-Diener & King, 2008). Instead, they propose that there are “two traditions of happiness research, not two distinct types of happiness” (Biswas-Diener, Kashdan & King, 2009, p. 208).

In the next section, I looked at the relative standards theory as well as the link between economics and happiness.

3.3 Relative standards theory and economics and happiness

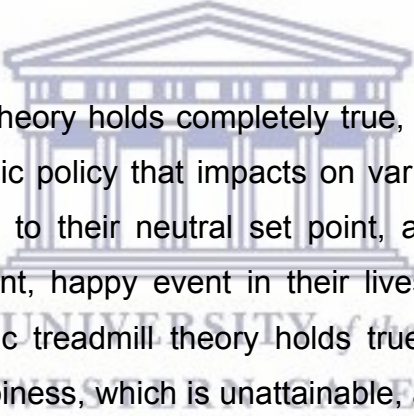
There are many different theories about happiness (well-being). Included in these theories are the telic theories – which state that a person has reached happiness when they have achieved a particular goal; cognitive theories – which focus on cognitive processes to achieve happiness i.e. the focus is on positive stimuli in aiding happiness; temperament and personality – which has looked at the role played by the individual’s temperament and personality in determining well-being; evolutionary theories – with their focus on feelings of pleasure and well-being which aids human survival; and the relative standards theory, which is discussed below. I focus on the relative standards theory as these theories have arguably influenced happiness studies to a great extent and are more helpful in the foci of this thesis. In this section, I briefly looked at what the relative standards theory is with a specific focus on the hedonic treadmill theory (also referred to as the adaptation theory) as well as the social comparison theory. I then turn to research undertaken from an economic perspective, and observe the links between economics and happiness.

3.3.1 Relative standards theory: hedonic treadmill and social comparison theory

Relative standards theories assert that “well-being results from a comparison between some standard, such as one’s past, others, goals, or ideals, and the actual conditions” (Diener & Ryan, 2009, p. 395). One such specific theory, which has gained momentum in psychology, is the hedonic treadmill theory or adaptation theory proposed by Brickman and Campbell in 1971. According to adaptation theory, “an individual’s past is the standard for comparison” (Diener & Ryan, 2009, p. 395). The theory further maintains that people “briefly react to good and bad events, but in a short time they return to neutrality” (Diener, Lucas & Scollon, 2006, p. 305). People thus react to their circumstances, and can experience emotions from happiness to unhappiness. However, these reactions to events are short-lived and in time, individuals adjust to the circumstances and they return to “positions of neutrality” or a set point (adaptation level) (Diener, Lucas & Scollon, 2006, p. 305). Individuals have a set point of happiness determined by genetics and personality (Easterlin, 2003, p. 11176). Life events may temporarily push one above or below this set point, but ultimately, the individual adjusts or adapts and will return to his or her individual level (Easterlin, 2003, p. 11176). However, as argued by Diener et al. (2006), “people continue to pursue happiness as they incorrectly believe that greater happiness lies just around the corner in the next goal accomplished, the next social relationship obtained or the next problem solved” (p. 305).

Evidence for the hedonic adaptation theory is provided in a study on lottery winners, that concluded that people who won the lottery were not happier than people who have not won the lottery (see Diener, Lucas & Scollon, 2006). Lottery winners experience an increase in wealth but adjust to these circumstances over time, indicating only a slightly higher level of happiness than before winning the lottery.

Easterlin (2003) has argued that what is of concern is not whether adaptation occurs, but whether adaptation is complete and how long it would take individuals to return to their initial levels. In his critique of the hedonic adaptation theory, Easterlin (2003) cites a 1990 study done by Mehnert, Kraus, Nadler and Boyd. This study examines life satisfaction amongst persons with disabilities, and a sample of persons who do not have disabilities. The findings point to the fact that the more serious the health problem, the less happy the person is. In other words, “an adverse change in health reduces life satisfaction; the worse change in health, the greater the reduction in life satisfaction” (Easterlin, 2003, p. 11177). Easterlin thus argues that adaptation does occur but even so, on average, an adverse change in circumstances, such as health, does have a lasting negative effect on happiness. So whilst hedonic adaptation takes place, it is not complete.

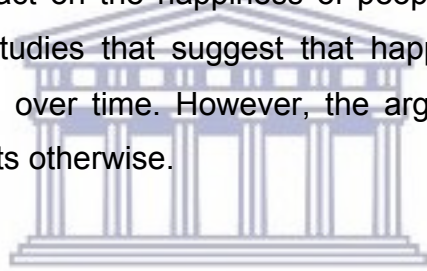


If the hedonic treadmill theory holds completely true, would it not be fruitless to try and influence public policy that impacts on various areas of life, since individuals are to return to their neutral set point, after an initial period of happiness or a significant, happy event in their lives? I would thus further argue that if the hedonic treadmill theory holds true, persons would be in perpetual pursuit of happiness, which is unattainable, as they would inevitably return to their initial points of happiness.

The hedonic treadmill theory has come under criticism and some scholars have disproved this theory. Diener, Lucas and Scollon (2006), who are amongst the critics and have asserted that research done amongst nations have revealed different levels of well-being, pointing to the fact that human beings do not adapt to all of their experiences. Instead, Diener, Lucas and Scollon (2006) offer five points of revision to the hedonic treadmill theory. First, they argue that whilst the hedonic treadmill theory posits that people return to a neutral set point after an emotionally significant event, this is incorrect. They present the research of Diener and Diener (1996), which provides evidence that people are happy most of the time. Further support for

this is offered by a study done by Biswas-Diener, Vittersø and Diener (2005), which found that most people are above a neutral set point of happiness. In addition, the World Values Survey reports that people are very or quite happy (Diener, Lucas & Scollon, 2006). Where adaptation occurs, people return to a positive set point rather than a neutral one.

Diener et al. (2006, p. 307) also argue that if set points do exist, these vary across individuals and that these may differ due to personality factors. The third revision they offer is that of multiple set points. They argue that as happiness has many different variables, so too would the happiness levels on these variables differ. The fourth revision offered is that happiness can change. This implies that there are no significant life or emotional events that can have a lasting impact on the happiness of people. Diener et al. (2006) present a number of studies that suggest that happiness levels for some individuals may change over time. However, the arguments put forward by Easterlin (2003) suggests otherwise.



The fifth revision of the theory is on individual differences in adaptation. The hedonic theory holds that adaptation occurs in similar ways across all individuals. However, research by Diener et al. (2006) indicates that there are differences amongst individuals in the rate and extent to which adaptation occurs. Whilst offering these five possible revisions to the hedonic treadmill theory, Diener, Lucas and Scollon (2006) still argue that this theory is relevant and important in understanding happiness. What their research does suggest is that efforts to increase happiness can be effective, and that these changes may be channelled to individuals, organisations and/or on a societal level.

Despite the critiques leveled against the hedonic treadmill theory, there is some value to be extracted from the theory. From the above, it appears as if adaptation does happen. However, the levels of adaptation might vary and in some instances, repeated exposure to certain experiences might sensitise

individuals rather than cause adaptation. Diener and Ryan (2009) are thus of the view that more nuanced theories of adaptation are perhaps more relevant and valid. There is some value to be accorded to the notion that persons may become sensitised to certain experiences. I would argue that persons may become sensitised through their own experiences but also through the experiences of others. Individuals may further develop better coping mechanisms, which may not see them return to previous happiness levels in the event of a negative event in their lives.

Social comparison theory falls within the umbrella theories related to relative standards theories. I very briefly discuss this theory as it relates to discussions on income and happiness (as discussed in section 3.3.2). Social comparison theory states that when asked, “how happy or satisfied are you with your life” individuals answer by comparing themselves to others around them and their lives to others. Merton and Kitt (1950) did a survey which provided evidence for social comparison theory. In the 1940 survey done with soldiers, it was found that soldiers who did not have a high school diploma were less likely to be promoted than soldiers with a high school education or better. However, the paradox was that the former soldiers were far happier than the soldiers with high school diplomas. The reason for this can be attributed to whom these groups were comparing themselves. The soldiers with less education compared themselves to their peers not in the army, and in comparison they were doing well. In contrast, the soldiers who were educated were doing poorly when they compared themselves to their educated peers. The social comparison theory offers insight into how women, from different racial backgrounds, class, and who have different experiences of colonialism and apartheid based on their positionalities, regard their experiences of gender equality and happiness. Social comparison theory provided a useful lens through which I could ascribe meaning to women who identified as black, white, indian and coloured, and their experiences of happiness.

Social comparison theory thus flags how happiness is linked to the practice of using other people as a standard. If they regard themselves better off than those that they compare themselves to, they will experience higher levels of happiness (Diener & Ryan, 2009). The critique against social comparison theory however is that it cannot explain why some persons who are extremely fortunate when compared to others are still unhappy. The example of lottery winners is a case in point. However, I would posit that the personal attributes (such as mental and physical health, age, family, amongst others) of an individual would play a role determining whether they are happy or not. Therefore, social comparison theory can only explain one element of happiness.

3.3.2 Economics and happiness

Within mainstream economic research and theory, the concept of happiness has been drawn on widely in respect to economic development. Economists have argued that economic development, more money, or higher household income or higher Gross National Product per capita, signifies an improvement in the conditions of the poor, and thus improves happiness (Sachs, 2012, p. 3). Many countries' policies thus pursue economic growth, as high economic growth rates are considered good for the welfare of the populations; a high GDP leads to increased income, which in turn leads to increased consumption and utility – which is the total satisfaction from consuming goods - and therefore makes people better off (Mahadea & Rawat, 2008). However, economic growth does not necessarily increase levels of happiness (subjective well-being) (Sachs, 2012). Frey and Stutzer (2002) have argued that economists should be concerned about individual happiness, and ask the question “how do economic growth, unemployment and inflation, and institutional factors such as governance affect individual well-being” (2002b, p. 402).

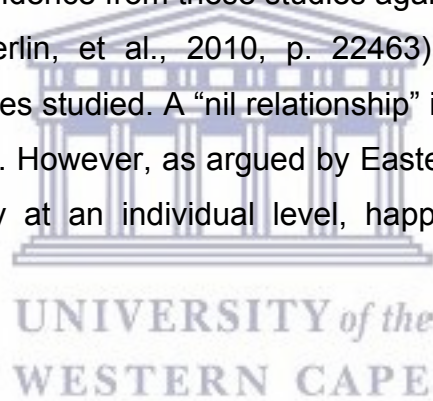
Easterlin (2003) elaborates that economists are interested in the observed behaviours of individuals and are thus concerned with “revealed preference” or, as Frey and Stutzer (2002a) have referred to it, as “decision utility” meaning whether goods A are preferred over goods B. Revealed preference theory takes an “objective” stance based on observable choices made by persons (Frey & Stutzer, 2002a). Easterlin argues that economic theories contend that individual well-being⁹ can be improved by increasing an individual’s own income and “that policy measures aimed at increasing the income of society as a whole lead to greater well-being” (2003, p. 11176). Economists are thus not interested in asking the individual concerned whether he or she is happy, but rather, observes behaviour and choices made by the individual to determine whether they are happy or not. This stance needs to be challenged, as it solely locates happiness in the choices people make about goods, promoting a neoliberal capitalist culture of consumerism. Consumerism thus brings happiness or gets equated with happiness.

Notwithstanding, there has been an increase in interest by economists in the relationship between income and happiness (Easterlin, 2003; Frey & Stutzer, 2002a; Kingdon & Knight, 2006). As Frey and Stutzer (2002a) have asserted, economists have long taken it for granted that an increase in income leads to greater happiness (measured by how much goods are consumed). Easterlin (1974, 1995) has consistently argued that raising the income of all will not increase the happiness of all. In what has become known as the ‘Easterlin Paradox’ or the ‘happiness-income paradox’, he suggests that there is no relation between economic development and happiness. He does argue that at any given point in time, individual happiness varies with individual income. Thus, wealthier people are happier. However, over time, as individual income increases the average wealth of society, there is no increase in the happiness levels of society. Easterlin (1994), looking at evidence from time series

⁹ Easterlin uses the term well-being interchangeably with life satisfaction, happiness, utility, as do many other scholars (see Easterlin, 2003). In the reference made here, well-being is measured through the question "Taken all together, how would you say things are these days-would you say that you are very happy, pretty happy, or not too happy" Easterlin, 2003, p. 11176).

studies in the United States, European countries and Japan, found that income growth in a particular society does not increase general happiness. The reason he gives is that “the material norms on which judgments of well-being are based increase in the same proportion as the actual income of the society” (Easterlin, 1994, p. 44). This implies that as an increase in income is achieved, the individual has other aspirations and the happiness bar thus shifts.

Easterlin, McVey, Switek, Sawangfa and Zweig (2010) expanded on the time-series studies, which looked at income and happiness in the United States, nine European countries and Japan, by including 17 Latin American countries, 17 developed countries, 11 Eastern European countries and nine less developed countries. Evidence from these studies again suggests that there is “nil relationship” (Easterlin, et al., 2010, p. 22463) between income and happiness in the countries studied. A “nil relationship” is usually over the long-term, ten years or more. However, as argued by Easterlin et al. (2010), in the short term, and initially at an individual level, happiness and income are related.



Research has shown that if income and happiness are compared at any point in time, those with more income are happier than those with less (Frey & Stutzer, 2002a). Notwithstanding, the overriding evidence seems to be that higher income does not automatically translate into greater happiness. Research shows as income increases over time, happiness does not (Easterlin, 1974). Easterlin (1974, 1995, 2001) and Frey and Stutzer (2002a) have argued that this is as a result of individuals comparing themselves relative to others. Furthermore, over time, an individual’s expectations and standards of living increases (Easterlin, 2013). You thus get accustomed to the standard of living and therefore happiness does not increase. Easterlin has also argued that when people were asked whether they would be better off if their income increases whilst everyone else’s stayed the same, people answered yes. However, when your income stays the same and everyone’s

stayed the same, you would not feel better off, even though your standard of living has not changed.

It is thus not absolute income that is used by persons to measure themselves against others, but rather their position relative to others. (This relates to the Social Comparison Theory as discussed in section 3.3.1 above). This position of Frey and Stutzer (2002a) builds on a similar position of Easterlin, who argues that individuals will only be satisfied with their income levels depending on how they compare with the income levels of others in their society (Easterlin, 1974).

In South Africa, Kingston and Knight (2006, 2007) found that relative income appears to impact on persons above the poverty line but not below, where absolute income has a more important effect on happiness. Møller's (2007) study supports the finding related to absolute income, and found that there is a close relationship between improving the material living conditions of black South Africans and quality of life. The study found that improving the material realities of black South Africans leads to an increase in quality of life. This finding seems self-evident, given the relative position of people who were classified as black, coloured and indian under apartheid.

In summation, the research on income and happiness points to the following. Increased income does not increase happiness over time (Easterlin, 1974), neither does additional income (Frey & Stutzer, 2002b; Sachs, 2012). Income has a significant effect and positively impacts on improving the happiness of people living below the poverty line or in poorer nations (Diener & Ryan, 2009; Kingston & Knight, 2006, 2007). However, income does not have this effect on wealthier people (Diener & Ryan, 2009). Lastly, differences in income account only for a low proportion of the amount of difference in happiness among people (Frey & Stutzer, 2002b). What this points to is that where income improves the material conditions of people's lives, it makes them

happier. Said differently, income makes people happy when it improves their living conditions.

3.4 Happiness factors

As indicated in Chapter One, at the centre of many governmental policies is the goal of improving the quality of life of its citizens. One of the measures to do this has been to increase the GDPs of countries, and to improve the economic development of a country. However, as has been discussed in Chapter One and earlier in this chapter, GDP and economic indicators have not necessarily translated into improved quality of life for individuals. So how does one improve the quality of life or happiness of individuals? Or posed differently, what are those factor that are associated with happiness. This section briefly considers this question.

Research has explored the link between a range of material life circumstances and happiness, and have found links been particular areas of individual human life and happiness. As with much of the research related to happiness, the findings stem from asking individuals how happy they are or how satisfied they are with life. Happiness is thus self-reported.

Frey and Stutzer (2002a) consider the factors associated with happiness. They identify five categories of factors that underlie (or are associated with) happiness. These are personality (including levels of optimism, whether the person is an introvert or extrovert), socio-demographics (including age, gender, marital status, education), economic factors (referring to income levels, whether the person is employed or unemployed), contextual and situational factors (refers to amongst others interpersonal relations with colleagues, family and friends, as well as stress levels) and institutional factors, which they refer to as the “the extent of political decentralisation and

citizens' direct political participation rights" (Frey & Stutzer, 2002a, p. 11). In other words, factors such as freedom, levels of democracy and governance issues are considered as institutional factors. Layard, Clark and Senik (2012) provide support for these five categories as underlying factors associated with happiness in their discussion on the causes of happiness and misery.

It was beyond the scope of this dissertation to present a comprehensive account of each of the five factors listed above. Instead, and in keeping with the findings of the qualitative and quantitative components of this study, I have primarily focused on a few key factors, namely, socio-demographics, contextual and situational factors, as well as institutional factors.

With regards to socio-demographic factors, I will briefly reflect on age, marital status and race. The research on age and happiness is inconclusive. Earlier scholarship on age has argued that older persons are less happy than younger persons, whilst more recent scholarship has argued the opposite (Diener & Ryan, 2009; Frey & Stutzer, 2002a). The media through advertising, and with its capitalist agenda, has potentially had a role in portraying the narrative of younger persons as being happier and older persons as being unhappy and quarrelsome (Frey & Stutzer, 2002a). Instead, Oswald (1997) has contended that the relationship between age and happiness is U-shaped, meaning that younger and older persons are happier (dependent on a number of factors which include health, etc.), and persons around the age of 40 years are more unhappy. What is clear from the literature however is that more research is required to investigate the relationship between age and happiness.

Marriage is "robustly related to happiness" (Seligman, 2002, p. 55). Easterlin (undated) based on various studies also agrees with this notion that marriage has a "positive effect on happiness, whilst dissolution has a permanently negative effect (undated, p. 10). Research findings indicate that people who

are married are happier than those persons who are not married, and that there are a number of reasons for this (Diener, Gohn, Suh & Oishi, 2000; Stutzer & Frey, 2006). Powdthavee (2009) has argued marriage (or being in a stable relationship or a cohabitating couple) may be beneficial for couples financially; that it provides couples with constant emotional support, which serves as a buffer against stress; it serves as protection against loneliness; and it provides one with a sense of belonging and meaning. Furthermore, married people engage in less risky behaviour out of concern for their partner. Research has also shown that in some countries the effects of marriage or of being in a stable, cohabitating relationship are the same for the reason that cohabitation is often seen as the equivalent to marriage. Whilst in other countries they constitute very different statuses.

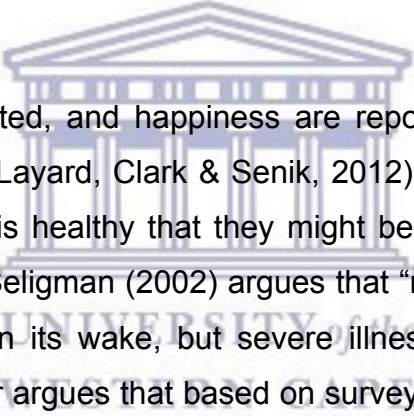
Stutzer and Frey (2006) have indicated that research has shown that married people are in better physical and psychological health and that they live longer. Married women and men are also happier than single women and men. This is quite a general statement to make, and whilst Stutzer and Frey (2006) have said that this finding holds true for numerous studies around the world, they do not indicate whether the findings are based on self-reports, and whether this takes into account the many different ways in which women (and men) are positioned in society. Furthermore, there are no reported differences between the levels of subjective well-being of married men and women. Stated differently, Stutzer and Frey (2006) have argued that marriage does not benefit one gender more than another. Posel and Casale (2015), looking at data from a study in South Africa, have found that only a third of married or couples living together (heterosexual) indicate the same levels of happiness as their partner. They have found that there are substantial differences between men and women in their levels of subjective well-being. Men and women's differences relate to amongst others, whether there are small children in the household (which negatively impact on women's well-being) and the amount of housework undertaken by men and women in the house.

Research by Lucas, Clark, Georgellis and Diener (2003) offers somewhat of a different picture than the general one on marriage and well-being. Their longitudinal research has shown that people adapt to marriage and return to levels of well-being prior to their marriage (Lucas, Clark, Georgellis & Diener, 2003). In other words, marriage only had a 'small boost' in their satisfaction levels (Lucas et al., 2003, p. 535). This would support other research which has questioned whether it is marriage that 'causes' men and women to be happy or whether it is more likely that happy people would get married (see Diener & Ryan, 2009).

Whilst marriage and happiness may be linked, and whilst married people may be happier than single people, marriage can also be a site of oppression for women, as much feminist literature and feminists over the century have argued. Ahmed (2007/08) has questioned the arguments put forward by happiness scholars that marriage leads to or contributes greatly to happiness. She makes the argument that the renewed focus on happiness (or what is perceived as a 'crisis in happiness') has not resulted in an interrogation of social ideals, but rather that these social ideals (whether unjust or not) have received 'fresh' political urgency. Marriage is thus one such ideal that has not been questioned; instead, it has been put forward that failure to follow this ideal (of marriage, amongst others) is what causes unhappiness. Ahmed's (2010) argument, with which I agree, that marriage and the promise of happiness in marriage may compel women to stay in marriages where they are not happy, or to stay in unhealthy marriages, and may push women towards patriarchal relationships even if the relationships were abusive. Marriage is thus used as an instrument of maintaining power over women's bodies – the subjugation and control of some bodies (women's bodies) by others. I return to the arguments made by Ahmed and other feminists against the notion of happiness in the next section.

It has been reported that there is a difference in the happiness levels of people across diverse racial backgrounds (Frey & Stutzer, 2002a). In South

Africa, differences in happiness have also been observed. It comes as no surprise that Møller (1998), looking at the quality of life of South Africans in the 1980s, reported that whites were most satisfied with their lives and that black people were most dissatisfied with their lives. Given the social injustices of apartheid, this finding is not surprising. In 2000, Møller indicated, “happiness and life satisfaction mirror the inequalities which are a legacy of the past” (Møller, 2000, p. 22), with black people least satisfied and happy with life and white people most satisfied and happy. Møller wrote this article six years into democracy. It is for this reason that an intersectional approach best provides a lens with which to look at happiness, as how people are raced cannot be used as an indicator alone in ascertaining happiness. Rather, race, gender, social class and geopolitical location, amongst others, intersect to shape one’s life satisfaction and happiness.



Health, where self-reported, and happiness are reportedly highly correlated (Frey & Stutzer, 2002a; Layard, Clark & Senik, 2012). It appears self-evident that when an individual is healthy that they might be more satisfied with life than when they are ill. Seligman (2002) argues that “moderate ill health does not bring unhappiness in its wake, but severe illness does” (2002, p. 58). Easterlin (2013) however argues that based on survey data, and in opposition to set point theory, “adverse health changes have a lasting negative effect on happiness and that there is less than complete adaptation to deteriorating health” (2013, p. 7). It does however appear that happiness might also have an impact on health (Layard, Clark & Senik, 2012). Studies show that happier individuals may have better physical health in the future, and that more positive affect and life satisfaction impacts on longevity (Diener & Chan, 2011; Frey, 2011).

In the same manner that relations with family and friends are important in happiness, so too are relations and the feeling that others (those in your community, or institutions) can be trusted. Layard et al. (2012) have argued that trust plays an important part in life satisfaction and that trust causes life

satisfaction. This is an especially important in looking at what the state can do, in its governance and through its policies, to bolster the trust that citizens have in its ability to effectively carry out its functions.

It appears indisputable that one cannot be happy if your freedom is curtailed. Freedom is an important aspect of human flourishing (Layard, Clark & Senik, 2012). By the same principle, equality is an important factor in happiness. Studies have shown that inequality reduces happiness (Layard et al., 2012; Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009), and that social injustices have an impact on life satisfaction (Møller, 2000).

In the next section, I present and discuss feminist critiques of the notion of happiness.

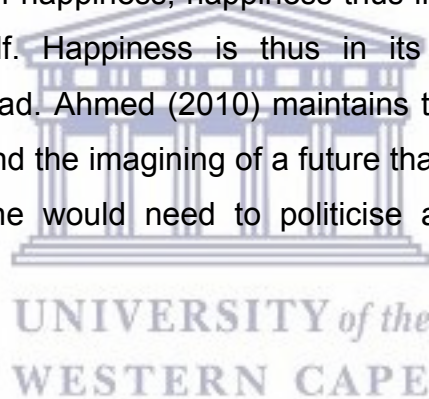


3.5 Feminist critiques of happiness

Sara Ahmed (2010) argues that a discourse on happiness is used by many to justify oppression, particularly the oppression of women, and that many feminist, black and queer scholars have shown this. Through happiness, social norms are now portrayed as social goods. Happiness, one can argue, is used to ensure that women in particular are held to certain social norms, no matter how oppressive, and these social norms would represent what is seen as good. Ahmed joins feminist scholars who have come before her in critiquing happiness as a social good and something that everyone wants. Friedan (1965) and de Beauvoir (1997) had both argued that the notion of happiness has been used to portray particular situations as happy events. Friedan (1965) argued that the image of the happy housewife had been used to promote 'good femininity', and that women were taught that to be good wives and caring mothers was what would bring them happiness. Furthermore, the media, scientists and society labeled women who wanted

fulfilling lives outside of being wives and mothers as “neurotic, unhappy, unfeminine” (Friedan, 1965, p. 16). Happiness, for Friedan, was thus linked to the roles that women played and the work they performed, using happiness as a guise and as justification for the gendered, unpaid labor that they performed. Friedan, it should be noted, was referring specifically to the United States during the 1960s.

Ahmed (2007/08, 2010) has argued that we are promised happiness, which is tied to objects, “happy objects”. Pursuance of these “happy objects”, which “circulate as social goods”, thus leads one on the path to happiness (Ahmed, 2007/08, p. 123). This is indeed what she critiques, that happiness can be located within objects. She posits that happiness appears to reside in being close to these objects of happiness; happiness thus lies in proximity to it and not in the object itself. Happiness is thus in its very nature futuristic, something that lies ahead. Ahmed (2010) maintains that not all is lost in the concept of happiness and the imagining of a future that it optimistic. She does however argue that one would need to politicise and revolutionalise this promise of happiness.



This latter argument of Ahmed is one that I would like to pursue. This thesis is premised on the argument that happiness should be a feminist issue, and that feminists should be concerned about happiness or subjective well-being. We should acknowledge the importance of Ahmed’s caution against the popular discourse of happiness, which may serve to obfuscate the material conditions of women’s lives. Indeed, the struggle for happiness should be seen as a feminist struggle. Not, as Ahmed argues, because a popular and academic construction of happiness may serve discursively to justify oppression, but rather that happiness is the end goal of struggles against oppression. In this struggle for happiness, the feminist “killjoy” (a term used by Ahmed) is a necessity. The struggle against gender inequality is by its very nature a struggle against the normative social order, which will cause discomfort and unhappiness. However, I argue that it is a necessary struggle and to borrow

from Zembylas (2015, 2018), discomfort and unhappiness is necessary if we are to imagine a different social order, free from patriarchy and inequalities of different kinds. It is through being feminist killjoys, raising uncomfortable matters, which disturb and disrupt, and working and sitting with the discomfort and unhappiness that we will achieve happiness.

Whilst Ahmed critiques the manner in which the notion of happiness is deployed, Braidotti (2006) contends that indeed, “happiness is a political issue, as are well-being, self-confidence and a sense of empowerment” (2006b, p. 230), and that the feminist movement has placed these matters central to the “social and political agenda: happiness as a fundamental human right and hence a political question” (2006b, p. 240). According to her, “happiness, in this scheme of thought, is a political question and the role of the state is to enhance and not to hinder humans in their striving to become all they are capable of” (2006b, p. 230).

Further critiques against the notion of happiness can be leveled against economists who have linked happiness to more money, or higher household income, as well as preference for goods (see section 3.3.2). Happiness, in some scholarly work, has thus been packaged in a manner which feeds into neoliberal capitalist consumerist discourse, with its focus on material consumption. Linked to Ahmed’s “happy objects”, the pursuance of these objects, packaged as happiness, serves neoliberal capitalist concerns. In addition, in neoliberal societies, happiness becomes an individual concern, putting the struggle for happiness squarely in the control of individuals, taking the focus off the impact of social injustices in society and the structural inequalities that are pervasive. In other words, if individuals fail to achieve happiness, it is because of something that they did or did not do. No responsibility is thus accorded to the state and other institutions for the inequities that prevail, and thus the state is absolved from any role in bringing about happiness for its citizens.

In this study, I have focussed on happiness as entailing affect – with the focus being on positive and negative emotions (as defined in happiness studies) – and on life satisfaction. However, as pointed out earlier in the chapter, the initial focus was on life satisfaction, which proved somewhat challenging. In engaging with the critiques on happiness, and later with the findings of the study, and given how I employed an intersectional lens throughout the study, it became important to consider affect, as offered by feminist scholars.

It became clear at one point in the study, that by focusing on happiness, I had to consider that we are affective beings and that affective well-being is important. Affective well-being refers to something other than what happiness scholars have posited. In the context of feminist scholarship, affect is different from emotions. The definition of affect, as set out in Chapter One, best encapsulates the notion. Affect refers to the “bodily capacities to affect and be affected or the augmentation or diminution of a body’s capacity to act, to engage, to connect, such that autoaffection is linked to the self-feeling of being alive - that is ‘aliveness’ or vitality” (Clough, 2007, p. 2). Affect theories further acknowledge that some bodies are more likely to feel particular affects and emotions than others, given unequal power relations and social injustices based on how bodies are gendered, raced and classed (Coleman, 2016).

Emotion has been distinguished from affect in the following manner. Ahmed (2001) has described emotions as “something that moves us”, but it is also about attachment i.e. that which connects us to others. She thus argues that “emotions do things, and they align individuals with communities – or bodily space with social space – through the very intensity of their attachments” (Ahmed, 2001, p. 11). Affect and emotions (as in happiness) thus becomes important in this study, in knowing how women (and their bodies and emotions) are affected by their different individual experiences, but also by the experiences of the collective. Affect thus takes women’s experiences of the

present into account, but also recognises how history has had differing effects on women from diverse racial backgrounds, class, geopolitical locations, etc. My study takes cognisance of how women from their various positionalities experience this affect, gender equality and happiness.

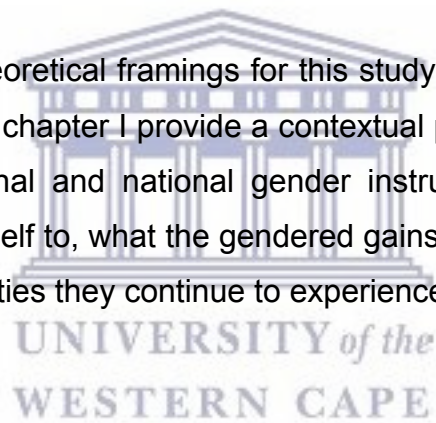
3.6 Conclusion

In this chapter I have looked at the definition of happiness. The definition employed in this study was the “overall enjoyment of your life as-a-whole” (Veenhoven, 2004, p. 6), with a primary focus on life satisfaction. As noted, it became necessary to look at affect later on in this study, and I needed to distinguish between happiness-as-affect (emotions) and happiness-as-life satisfaction. What is clear from the literature is that the notion of happiness and the study thereof is complex. Simultaneously, scholars need to clearly identify which aspect of happiness is being studied, whilst leaving room for different notions of happiness to emerge from participants.

I have looked at the relative standards theory in this chapter. Whilst it provides a lens through which to understand happiness and engage with happiness scholarship, it has some shortcomings, as was discussed. The shortcomings in the theories are an indication that there are multiple factors (events) that can impact on happiness. The factors that impact on happiness include personality, socio-demographics, economics, contextual, situational and institutional factors. Identifying these factors has significance for policy interventions in bringing about happiness. However, as discussed, these very factors, events or ‘happy objects’ can be used by policy makers, the media and neoliberal capitalists to promote normative social values as social goods, maintaining the social order with all its social injustices. It is for this reason that feminist scholars have argued that the notion and promise of happiness serve to keep women in positions of subordination.

Returning to the research undertaken by economists on happiness, this research has a direct link with the present study on gender equality and happiness. Income and economic status are common factors in both the economists' studies on happiness, as well as often being an indicator of gender equality. Income thus resides as an important indicator in both the happiness and gender equality aspects of this study. The economic focus on happiness becomes essential in the context of this study, employing Fraser's notion of redress as an important aspect of ensuring social (and gender justice). Notwithstanding, I have noted that caution should be applied when looking at how higher incomes have been attached to happiness, and that it has often been within the context of neoliberal social orders, in which consumerism is favoured.

Having provided the theoretical framings for this study in Chapter Two and in this chapter, in the next chapter I provide a contextual picture of what some of the international, regional and national gender instruments are that South Africa has committed itself to, what the gendered gains for women have been, as well as what inequalities they continue to experience.



Chapter Four: Gender equality in global and local (South African) contexts

4.1 Introduction

The idea and call for gender equality are central to many feminist struggles and women's movements. Gender oppression has led many feminists, activists and scholars to mobilise for gender reforms in practices, behavior, institutions, policy, legislation and the state itself. As a consequence, actors such as the governments of countries like Rwanda and Sweden (Republic of Rwanda, n.d.; Government Offices of Sweden, n.d.) and multilaterals (such as the United Nations) have included gender equality and women's empowerment as important aspects of their work (see UN Women, n.d.). The United Nations, in particular, has become a significant role-player in the struggle for gender equality and gender justice. The concern for gender equality and gender justice has been highlighted over the decades through, amongst others, the numerous United Nations (UN) Conferences on Women convened. To date, four United Nations World Conferences have been convened. These were in Mexico (1975), Copenhagen (1980), Nairobi (1985) and Beijing (1995). The Beijing Conference on Women led to numerous countries becoming signatory to the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action. The Beijing Platform for Action is a key international policy document that guides gender equality and women's empowerment. Subsequently, several 5-year reviews have been held post-Beijing to determine progress made in women's empowerment and gender equality.

South Africa has embarked on a number of measures in the pursuit of gender equality. This chapter foregrounds the actions taken by the state to eliminate gender inequalities within the context of the global quest for women's empowerment and women's rights. In highlighting the concrete measures undertaken, the chapter provides the basis against which to compare

participants' experiences and perceptions of gender equality and whether in their imaginaries, gender equality has been achieved. This chapter follows the theoretical framing of gender and gender equality as well as happiness. Whereas the previous two chapters provide the theoretical framing of this study, this chapter provides a more contextual picture of what some of the gendered gains for women have been, as well as the continued inequalities that they experience.

With the above goals of the chapter in mind, it is structured as follows. It firstly considers gender equality gains made at a global level by looking at, amongst others, international gender instruments. It next turns to consider the gendered legislative measures, starting with the adoption of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, which is considered one of the most progressive in the world. The chapter further, very briefly, paints a picture of the challenges that women continue to face globally and locally, notwithstanding these high-level policy commitments. Finally, I look at the representation of women in government, women in the labour force, and indicators pertaining to women's living conditions, education, health and violence committed against women.

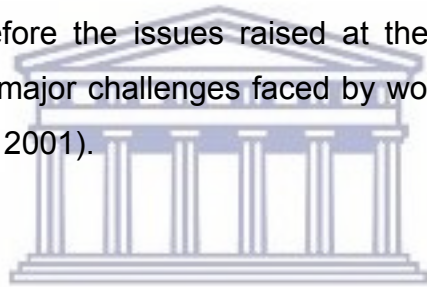
4.2 Global gender equality policy frameworks

4.2.1 United Nations conferences, international instruments and commitments

In this sub-section, I give a brief overview of the global picture of gender (in)equality by looking at the United Nations Women's Conferences, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These provide a sketch of historical moments,

international instruments, and commitments made by the global community to women's empowerment and gender equality.

United Nations Women's Conferences: The United Nations has taken up a pivotal role in the struggle for gender equality. This active role is demonstrated in the four world conferences on women that have been organised to date (see UN Women, n.d.). These women's conferences have sought to galvanise and unite communities from around the globe around "common" objectives, in the main relating to women's empowerment, gender equality and eliminating discrimination against women and the girl-child. These conferences have had their own share of contestation, with women in the global South arguing that the conferences failed to take women's diversity into account, and therefore the issues raised at the conferences were not necessarily considered major challenges faced by women of the South or by black women (McEwan, 2001).



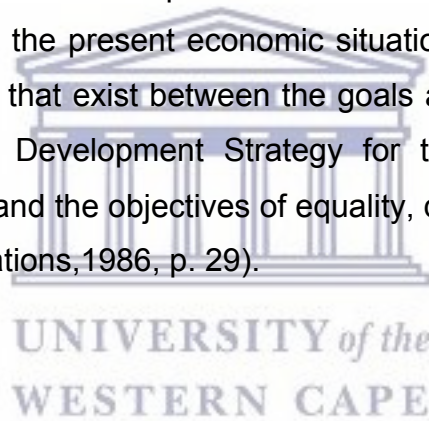
McEwan (2001) notes that the contestation amongst feminists and specifically, between western and 'third world' feminists played itself out at the United Nations Conference on Women in Mexico City in 1975 and at the Copenhagen Conference. The debates, she argues, displayed the differences amongst the women and their specific priority concerns, between women from the North/South and East/West and along class and political lines (McEwan, 2001, p. 99). Although unity amongst women was acknowledged, the differences were starkly recognised. The Copenhagen United Nations Women's Conference in 1980 recognised that the forms of women's oppression are not the same:

The causes of the inequality between women and men are directly linked with a complex historical process. Inequality also derives from political, economic and cultural factors. The form in which this inequality manifests itself is as varied as the

economic, social and cultural conditions of the world community (United Nations, 1980, p. 7).

This was even more poignantly recognised at the Nairobi Conference:

Although throughout history and in many societies women have been sharing similar experiences, in the developing countries the problems of women, particularly those pertaining to the integration in the development processes, are different from the problems women face in industrialised countries and are often a matter of survival. Failure to recognize these differences leads, inter alia, to neglect the adverse effect of the insufficient progress made towards improvement in national policies or programmes and the present economic situation as well as the interrelationships that exist between the goals and objectives of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Decade and the objectives of equality, development and peace (United Nations, 1986, p. 29).



The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW): CEDAW is a significant human rights treaty which was adopted by the United Nations in 1979 and which came into effect in 1981. CEDAW is primarily concerned with human rights, dignity and equality between women and men. It is an international bill of rights, and sets out specific actions that governments should undertake to ensure that women get to enjoy the freedoms and dignity associated with equality between men and women, and which ensures the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women. The Convention covers three main areas: (1) civil rights and legal status, (2) reproduction, and (3) impact of cultural factors on gender relations. The Convention outlines a number of articles. Fourteen of these articles deals specifically with the elimination of discrimination and the achieving equal rights between women and men.

CEDAW is one of the earliest and certainly one of the key international instruments that foregrounds the attainment of gender equality. Any discussion on international instruments would be remiss without deliberating on the progress made in terms of CEDAW. States that are signatory to the Convention are required to report at least every four years. South Africa is a signatory to CEDAW. Progress related to South Africa being a signatory will be discussed later in this chapter.

Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action: The 1995 UN World Conference on Women held in Beijing (hereafter Beijing Conference) was a decisive moment in the global quest for gender equality, gender justice and women's empowerment. It led to 189 countries adopting the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which sets 12 critical areas for concern and action that need to be taken by Governments namely: (1) Women and poverty; (2) Education and training of women; (3) Women and health; (4) Violence against women; (5) Women and armed conflict; (6) Women and the economy; (7) Women in power and decision-making; (8) Institutional measures for the advancement of women; (9) Human rights of women; (10) Women and the media; (11) Women and the environment; and (12) The girl-child.

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action has been influenced by the capability approach (see Chapter Two for a discussion on the human capabilities approach). The Declaration makes an important call for freedom as a central demand for gender equality, stating that we should “Ensure the full implementation of human rights of women and the girl child as an inalienable right, integral and indivisible part of all human rights and fundamental freedoms” (United Nations, 1995, p. 2). The Beijing Declaration furthermore puts emphasis on the empowerment and agency of women, as indicated in section 13 of the Declaration which states that “Women's empowerment and their full participation on the basis of equality of all spheres of society including participation in the decision-making process and access to

power, are fundamental for the achievement of equality, development and peace” (United Nations, 1995, p. 3); as well as, in section 14, that “Women’s equal rights are human rights” (United Nations, 1995, p. 3).

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): The SDGs, the successor to the Millennium Development Goals¹⁰ (MDGs), was adopted by countries in September 2015, and came into force in January 2016. The set of 17 goals builds on the progress made with the MDGs and aims to “end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all” (United Nations, n.d., n.p.). Included in the 17 Sustainable Development Goals is Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. This SDG focuses directly on the attainment of gender equality and has amongst its targets ending discrimination against women and girls; eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls, which includes trafficking and other forms of exploitation; eradicating harmful practices inflicted upon women and girls, including female genital mutilation and early, forced marriage; recognising and valuing unpaid care and domestic work through the introduction and or provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the advancement of shared responsibility within the family and home; guarantee that women are able to participate fully and effectively in leadership opportunities and at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public spheres; ensure access to sexual and reproductive health and rights; introduce reforms that will ensure women’s equal rights to economic resources, ownership and control over land and property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources; promote the use of technology, particular information and communication technology that will promote the empowerment of women; adopt, and where in place, strengthen policies and

¹⁰ Heads of state at the United Nations Millennium Summit adopted the Millennium Development Goals, a set of eight goals, in September 2000. The MDGs were a set of time bound, measurable goals and targets for combatting poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation and discrimination against women. Goal 3 dealt specifically with promoting gender equality and empowering women. Goal 5 was geared towards improving maternal health. Goal 3 focused mainly on eradicating gender disparities in education and therefore was not holistic in the targets or indicators set for achieving gender equality between women and men.

legislation that promote gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls (United Nations, n.d.).

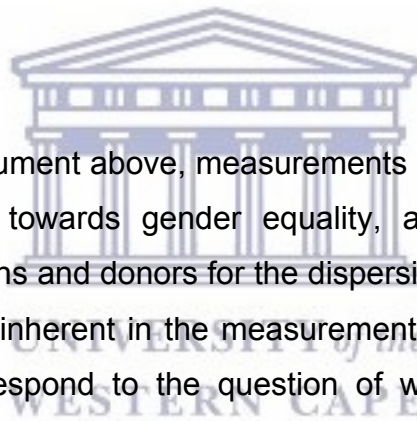
SDG Goal 5 is a marked improvement on the MDG Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women. Whilst the SDG focuses directly on targets, related to the realisation of gender equality, the MDG goal focused very narrowly on reducing disparity in education, considering the share of women in wage employment in non-agricultural sectors, and deliberating on the number of women in Parliament. The indicators set against the MDG goal were furthermore not well defined with regards to what it aimed to achieve. Goal 5 of the SDGs, in contrast and perhaps with the lessons learnt from the MDGs, conceptualises gender equality in a more comprehensive manner, taking the various nuances and complexities of gender equality into account and how gender equality can (possibly) be realised.

I have discussed three significant international instruments that focus on the attainment of gender equality and that continue to play a role in shaping South African geographies of gender justice. Whilst the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and the Sustainable Development Goals are by no means the only international instruments with gender equality as its concern, I have focused on them as South Africa is signatory to these, and has undertaken programmes to give effect to them. Given this context, it provides an important framework for the present study.

4.2.2 Gender equality measurements

Having looked at the historical moments, international instruments and conferences on gender equality, the question of whether women have made

any progress in attaining gender equality as expressed in these undertakings arises? This is a key question, which has been foregrounded since gender equality has received such prominence in international policies. A key part in answering this question has been the global initiative to set up measurables, in the form of gender related indices, to assess change and progress across space and time (Liebowitz & Zwingel, 2014). However, it has been argued that the attempt to quantify and naturalise measurement advances a reasoning that is part of a neoliberal capitalist response (Marchand & Runyan, 2010). Liebowitz and Zwingel (2014) have asserted that these measurements are attractive as “they embody allegedly masculine (read: superior) characteristics of reason, scientism, and hierarchy while eschewing context, emotion, and relationality” (p. 364). These measurements however have failed to challenge gender inequalities and gender hierarchies (Liebowitz & Zwingel, 2014).



Notwithstanding the argument above, measurements have taken centre stage in assessing progress towards gender equality, and are often used by international organisations and donors for the dispersing of aid, etc. In spite of the challenges that are inherent in the measurement of gender equality, this sub-section seeks to respond to the question of whether there has been progress in relation to gender equality by looking at two selected indices, namely the World Bank’s Gender Gap Report and the United Nations Development Programme’s Gender Inequality Index. These indices attempt to measure gender equality and provide a picture on the status of gender equality around the globe. The reports mentioned here provide an overview of gender equality as measured by specific indicators. They further provide a useful framework and statistics on a number of important indicators, including employment, education, health, political participation and so forth. It is useful to note that the same indicators are not used to measure gender equality across the different indices, and this is essentially one of the challenges with indices. The indicators used provide insight into how that particular organisation or multi-lateral conceptualises gender equality, and we can see that this varies. This speaks to the complexity of conceptualisations of gender

equality. Furthermore, it provides credence to the arguments made by Liebowitz and Zwingel (2014) that the emphasis on quantifying gender (by influential international organisations) have led to the perpetuation of narrow understandings of gender and “politically misleading conception of gender equality” (p. 363). Furthermore, they argue that these instruments fail to measure that which they set out to measure. It is worth noting that in addition to the Global Gender Inequality Index, in 2016 the United Nations Development Programme produced regional reports, specifically for Africa. After looking at the global indices, I will look at how some African countries have performed.

Global Gender Gap Index: Since 2006, the World Economic Forum has produced a Global Gender Gap Index and has consistently measured the same indicators over these years. This consistency allows for comparison to be made across the different countries, but it also allows the tracking of gender equality within countries (as well as between countries) over a number of years. The Gender Gap Index measures the gender-based gap between men and women on four sub-indices: economic participation and opportunity, health and survival, education, and political empowerment. The Gender Gap Index further ranks countries according to gender equality. It is important to note that the Index does not measure the levels of gender development in a country, rather, as indicated, the gender gaps.

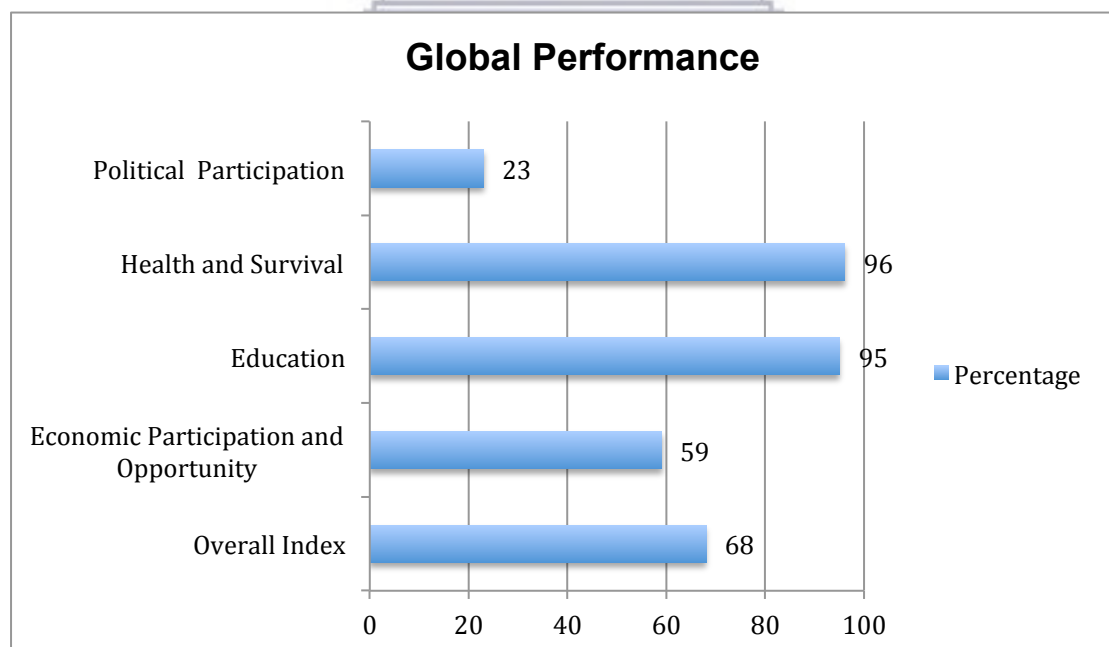
Before turning to the results of the Gender Gap Index, it is essential to look at what each of the sub-indices measure. Economic participation and opportunity looks at the participation of men and women in the labour forces, estimated female to male ratio in earned income, wage equality for similar work, the ratio of women to men among legislators, managers, senior officials, as well as the ratio of women to men in the technical and professional occupations (World Economic Forum, 2016). The Education sub-index measures the gap between women and men’s access to primary, secondary

and tertiary education, as well as the ratio of female to male literacy (World Economic Forum, 2016). The Health and Survival sub-index measure sex ratio at birth and life expectancy. The latter variable takes into account the impact of factors such as violence, disease and malnutrition on the lives of women and men (World Economic Forum, 2016). The last sub-index, political empowerment, takes into consideration the participation of women and men in decision-making at the political level. It looks at the number of men and women in ministerial positions, in parliament, as well as the number of years the men and women have been president or prime minister (World Economic Forum, 2016).

The figure below provides a snapshot of the progress on the four sub-indices as well as overall gender parity achieved.



Figure 2: Global Performance on the Gender Gap Index



Source: World Economic Forum (2016)

In 2016, the Gender Gap Index measured progress for 144 countries. As can be seen from Figure 2, overall countries managed to close 68% of its gender gap across the four sub-indices. Countries performed best (in terms of closing the gender gap) on the health and survival, and the education variables. Overall, the 144 countries managed to close 96% of their gender gap on health and 95% of the gender gap on education (World Economic Forum, 2016). This implies that, in order to achieve parity on these sub-indices, 4% of the gap in health and 5% in education needs to be closed. There is a 41% gap between women and men on economic participation and opportunity. This area clearly requires additional effort in reducing the gender-based gap between men and women. This statistic points to the nuances in the types of positions women and men hold and parity with regards to equal pay for equal work, amongst others. Of all the sub-indices, countries fared worst on the political participation index, with only 23% of the gender gap closed. Whilst progress may have been made by countries with regards to the number of women and men in ministerial positions and the number of women and men in parliament, the measure of the number of female heads of government to date has clearly impacted on the overall score on this index. All indications are that this indicator will not show any significant upward trend in the coming years.

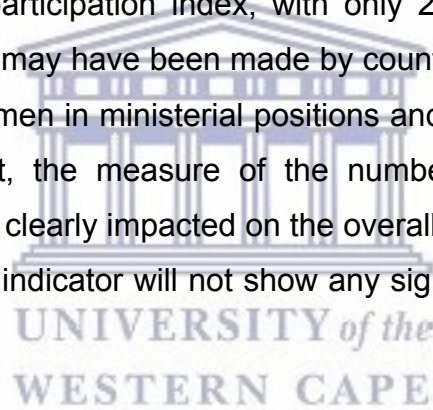


Table 1: Top 20 country rankings on the Global Gender Gap Index

Country	Global Index		Economic		Education		Health		Political	
	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score
Iceland	1	0.874	9	0.806	1	1.000	104	0.970	1	0.719
Finland	2	0.845	16	0.794	1	1.000	1	0.980	2	0.607
Norway	3	0.842	7	0.818	28	1.000	68	0.974	3	0.576
Sweden	4	0.815	11	0.802	36	0.999	69	0.974	6	0.486
Rwanda	5	0.800	8	0.817	110	0.958	89	0.972	8	0.452
Ireland	6	0.797	49	0.709	1	1.000	54	0.979	5	0.502
Philippines	7	0.786	21	0.780	1	1.000	1	0.980	17	0.386
Slovenia	8	0.786	19	0.784	25	1.000	76	0.973	18	0.385
New Zealand	9	0.781	24	0.765	40	0.999	104	0.970	16	0.390
Nicaragua	10	0.780	92	0.632	1	1.000	1	0.980	4	0.506
Switzerland	11	0.776	30	0.745	61	0.993	72	0.974	15	0.391

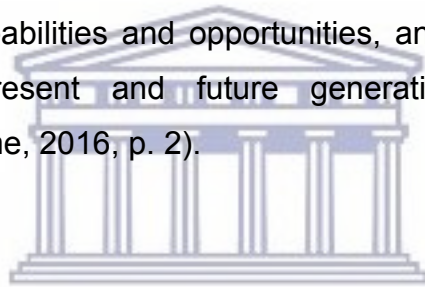
Burundi	12	0.768	1	0.865	124	0.917	66	0.974	28	0.314
Germany	13	0.766	57	0.691	100	0.966	54	0.979	10	0.428
Namibia	14	0.765	20	0.781	35	0.999	1	0.980	31	0.299
South Africa	15	0.764	63	0.677	55	0.995	1	0.980	13	0.404
Netherlands	16	0.756	76	0.659	60	0.994	103	0.970	14	0.401
France	17	0.755	64	0.676	1	1.000	1	0.980	19	0.365
Latvia	18	0.755	18	0.785	1	1.000	1	0.980	38	0.255
Denmark	19	0.754	34	0.735	1	1.000	106	0.970	29	0.309
United Kingdom	20	0.752	53	0.700	34	0.999	64	0.974	24	0.335

Source: World Economic Forum (2016)

Table 1 provides the ranking of the top 20 countries on the Index. It provides the results of the overall rating per country (ranked here from 1 to 20), as well as the score (the closer the score is to 1, the more equal it is - parity equals 1), and ranking on the sub-indices. Nordic countries take the top four positions with Iceland occupying position number 1 for the 8th consecutive year having closed 87% of its gender gap (World Economic Forum, 2016). Three countries in Africa are also ranked in the top 20 positions, namely Rwanda, having closed 80% of its gender gap; Namibia, having closed 76.5% of its gender gap; and South Africa, having closed 76.4% of its gender gap. As can be seen from the above table, South Africa ranks 15th on the Index. South Africa has thus by all accounts fared relatively well in closing the gender gap. From the above scores, South Africa has fared particularly well on the education and health indices, which can be borne out by data collected by Statistics South Africa (see discussion below). Universal access to education has been achieved and we have seen that life expectancy has also improved. As noted earlier, the health indices take into consideration violence. It is thus surprising that South Africa scored as well as it did on the overall health and survival index. South Africa has high rates of violence, with violence and accidents a major concern in the country, and accounting for one of the leading causes of death and lost disability-adjusted life years in South Africa (Seedat, van Niekerk, Jewkes, Suffla & Ratele, 2009; Statistics South Africa, 2017a). As discussed below, violence against women is a major concern, with women continuing to die at the hands of their intimate partners at a rate six times higher than the global rate (Abrahams, Jewkes, Martin, Mathews, Vetten &

Lombard, 2009). Given that the health and survival index takes violence into account, the result from the Gender Gap Index should be read with some caution, given South Africa's history and present status of being a violent country.

United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Gender Inequality Index (GII): The UNDP reports on gender inequality as well as gender development. This is done through the UNDP framework on human development. The UNDP indices on human development and gender inequality build on the human capabilities approach of Sen, Nussbaum and others, as elaborated on in Chapter Three. As noted in the Africa Human Development Report 2016, "gender inequality from the standpoint of human development is addressed by improving women's capabilities and opportunities, and contributing to better outcomes for the present and future generations" (United Nations Development Programme, 2016, p. 2).



As stated above, reports of achievement of progress towards gender equality may differ depending on the measurements used. The UNDP Gender Inequality Index (GII), for example, measures gender inequalities in three dimensions: (1) reproductive health – which includes maternal mortality and adolescent birth rates; (2) empowerment – which includes the proportion of seats occupied by women as well as the proportion of women and men (over 25 years) with some secondary education; (3) economic status – which considers labour force participation of men and women (15 years and older) (United Nations Development Programme, 2015). A high gender inequality score (the closer the score is to 1) indicates more disparities between men and women and the more loss to human development (United Nations Development Programme, 2015).

The Gender Inequality Index 2015 records the following for the top ten countries with the best Gender Inequality values. It should be noted that the closer the gender inequality value is to zero, the lower the inequality between men and women:

Table 2: Gender Inequality Index

Country	Gender inequality value ¹¹	GII Ranking 2014 ¹²	HDI Ranking ¹³
Slovenia	0.016	1	25
Switzerland	0.028	2	3
Germany	0.041	3	6
Denmark	0.048	4	4
Austria	0.053	5	23
Sweden	0.055	6	14
Netherlands	0.062	7	5
Belgium	0.063	8	21
Norway	0.067	9	1
Italy	0.068	10	27

Source: Compiled from UNDP (2015)

The table below reflects the top ten countries in Africa with the best GII values and ranking:

¹¹ The closer the value is to zero, the lower inequality between men and women.

¹² The GII rank is based on data for 155 countries.

¹³ The HDI is based on data for 188 countries.

Table 3: Top Ten African country rankings

Country	Gender Inequality value ¹⁴	GII 2014 ¹⁵	Ranking	HDI Ranking ¹⁶
Libya	0.134	27		94
Tunisia	0.240	48		96
Rwanda	0.400	80		163
Namibia	0.401	81		126
South Africa	0.407	83		116
Algeria	0.413	85		83
Mauritius	0.419	88		63
Botswana	0.480	106		106
Burundi	0.492	109		184
Zimbabwe	0.504	112		155

Source: Compiled from UNDP (2016)

One cannot over-emphasise the fact that it is important to consider what gets measured as indicators of, as well as the reliability of the data on, gender equality, which is illustrated in the above tables. Looking at the results for Africa, it leaves one in doubt about the accuracy of the reporting and data presented for countries like Libya¹⁷ and Tunisia¹⁸, that they lead the continent

¹⁴ The closer the value is to zero, the lower inequality between men and women.

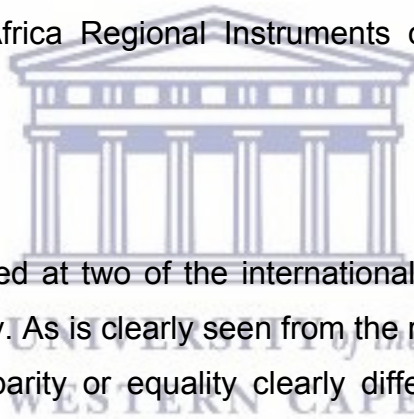
¹⁵ The GII rank is based on data for 155 countries.

¹⁶ The HDI is based on data for 188 countries.

¹⁷ In Libya, for example, women's rights and access to education, amongst others, were restricted under the Gaddafi government (Gender Concerns International, n.d.). Libyan legislation have also been found lacking in protecting women from domestic violence and personal status laws continues to discriminate against women in marriage and in inheritance matters (Human Rights Watch, 2017). Libyan legislation furthermore allows a reduced sentence for a man who injures or kills his wife or another female family member if she is suspected of having an extramarital relationship. Gender inequality is further seen in an order that was issued by officials in eastern Libya, in February 2017, that banned all women under the age of 60 from travelling from eastern Libya abroad on their own without a male guardian. Following an outcry by women activists and international organisations, this ban was revoked and a new ban was introduced restricting the travel abroad of all men and women aged 18 – 45. Special clearance would be required from security agencies for persons in this age group wishing to travel from eastern Libya abroad (Human Rights Watch, 2017).

in terms of lowest gender inequality between women and men. The same applies for Slovenia, which outranks for example, the Nordic countries on gender inequality.

A number of African countries fall within the lowest ranked countries on the GII. While the lowest GII ranked country overall is Yemen, with a GII value of 0.744, ranked 155th, Niger is ranked the second lowest of the countries included in the GII at 154 (GII = 0.713), followed by Chad (153), Côte d'Ivoire (151), Mali (150) the Democratic Republic of Congo (149), Central African Republic (147), Liberia (146), Sierra Leone (145), Burkino Faso (144) and The Gambia (143). The high levels of gender inequality in Africa are cause for concern, as a number of the countries listed are signatory and have committed to various Africa Regional Instruments on gender equality and women's empowerment.

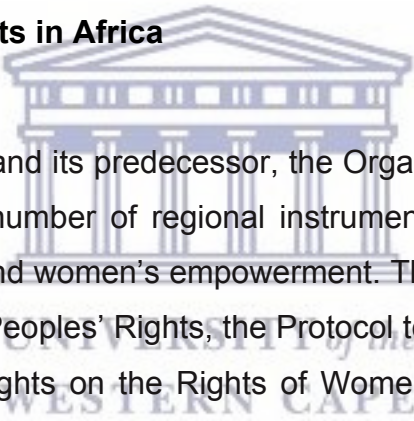


The section above looked at two of the international global instruments that measure gender equality. As is clearly seen from the results presented above, the results on gender parity or equality clearly differs based on measures used as well as the quality of the data. This is a very important point, and bears underscoring: what is measured and data quality are crucial factors in assessing gender equality. Nonetheless, it is important to measure gender equality in order to make informed decisions on where action, whether through policy or programmes, needs to be taken. Measuring and reporting on gender equality is a further requirement for many countries that are signatory to various international agreements. However, as seen from the above results, how gender equality is defined and measured is varied and will thus

¹⁸ Human Rights Watch (2017) has acknowledged that Tunisia is one of the countries in the Arab region with more progressive women's rights. Tunisia's electoral law has been amended which calls for gender parity and which indicates that men and women should alternate on electoral lists. This would account, in part, for the low inequality value on the GII. However, the levels of gender based violence is high in Tunisia (Amnesty International, 2015, Middle East Monitor, 2017). Tunisian law is ineffective in protecting violence against women, rapists of women under the age of 20 escape punishment if they marry their victims and marital rape is not recognised (Amnesty International, 2015).

produce diverse results. A clear example of how varied the result can be is Iceland. When looking at gender parity as measured by the Gender Gap Index, Iceland ranks the highest amongst the countries measured, meaning the gender gap between Icelandic men and women is the smallest amongst the countries measured. However, Iceland does not appear amongst the top ten countries with the lowest inequality between men and women on the Gender Inequality Index. Gender (in)equality definitions, measures and data quality are not only important for academic purposes. State and activist actions are taken on the basis of the indices such as the Gender Gap Index and Gender Inequality Index, and therefore ensuring quality data and measures are imperative.

4.3 Regional instruments in Africa



The African Union (AU) and its predecessor, the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), has adopted a number of regional instruments pertaining to human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment. These include the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa, and the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development. These regional instruments are in accord with international gender treaties ratified by Member States, and which call for the implementation and domestication of agreements. Moreover, each of the regional gender instruments recognizes that Africa faces its own, unique material realities, which are different from the global North. These differences were starkly debated and recognised at the UN Women's Conferences, more so in Nairobi in 1985 (Çağatay, Grown & Santiago, 1986). In this section, I briefly discuss these protocols, charters and declarations, as South Africa has ratified these agreements and thus has certain obligations in respect of these.

The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights: The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, which South Africa ratified in 1996, is essentially a *human* rights instrument. Articles two and eighteen of the Charter deal specifically with gender rights, and note that the enjoyment of rights and freedoms shall not be limited by discrimination on the basis of race, sex, ethnic groups, language, religion, amongst others. The Charter further notes that States need to take action to ensure the elimination of discrimination against women, and ensure the protection of the rights of women and children, as guaranteed in international declarations and conventions (African Union, n.d.(a)).

The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa: The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, ratified by South Africa in 2004, deals specifically with the rights of women. Of the many articles included in the Protocol, it amongst others encompasses the principles of elimination of discrimination against women, and includes the principle of ensuring equality between women and men. It further prompts States to take action, through education and information, to address social, traditional and cultural practices that are harmful to women. The Protocol deals with a variety of economic, social and political rights, including access to justice; education and training; housing; food security; protection of women in armed conflict; rights to life, integrity and security of person (African Union, n.d.(b).).

The Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa: The Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa made by African Heads of State in 2004 recognises the many challenges and obstacles that continue to face women on the African continent, and which impede women's empowerment and progress. It therefore calls on States to take action including economic, social and legal measures to address the HIV and AIDS epidemic; guarantee the effective participation of women in peace processes; initiate campaigns

against gender based violence, including the trafficking of women and girls; promote and introduce legislation that recognises women's access to land, property and inheritance; promote the principle of gender equality; and ensure the protection of human rights for women and girls, amongst others (African Union, n.d (c)).

The SADC Protocol on Gender and Development: The SADC Protocol on Gender and Development aims to mainstream and integrate gender matters into the work and the programmes of SADC. Key provisions include the empowerment of women; the establishment of constitutional and legal rights to enshrine gender equality; to eliminate discrimination and gender based violence against women; ensure the equal participation of women in decision making; equal access to education and training; encourage the adoption of policies and programmes that address the physical, emotional and social well-being of women, amongst others (Southern African Development Community, n.d.). An updated Protocol was signed in June 2016. The updated Protocol takes into consideration the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the African Unions Agenda 2063, and the Beijing Plus 20 Review. It further sets out that States should develop and strengthen specific laws, programmes and policies that would ensure that gender equality and equity are realised. Included in the updated Protocol is the protection of widows and widowers and their rights.

The Charters and Protocols discussed above provide a snapshot of the regional gender instruments that have been adopted to address women's empowerment and gender equality. At face value, Africa as a continent, has thus taken significant steps to ensure the realisation of women's empowerment and gender equality, in light of the particular material conditions of women in Africa and specifically, in each of its member states. Notwithstanding the criticisms leveled above against indices measuring gender inequality, it is concerning that so many countries on the continent, which have committed to international and regional instruments, continue to

trail other countries, including in the Americas and Europe, in respect to progress made in the achievement of gender equality. This possibly speaks to whether countries have domesticated and implemented some of the principles outlined in these charters and protocols. South Africa, as a signatory to these instruments, would have had to take measures domestically to ensure that the provisions set out in these instruments are achieved.

In the next section, I will consider the steps that South Africa has taken at a legislative level to address gender equality and women's empowerment, in accordance with international and regional instruments to which it is signatory, and commitments made. I will further outline the gains made and the factors that continue to impede gender equality in South Africa.

4.4 South African context



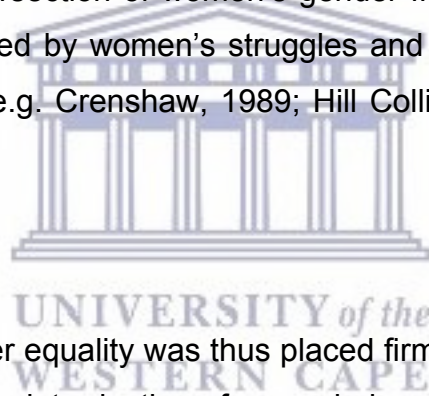
One cannot begin to discuss the achievements made by women and the challenges that we continue to face without looking at the women's struggle for liberation. The women's movement¹⁹ in South Africa has always been very active in the national liberation struggle (Hassim, 2006; Walker, 1991). A significant moment in the history of women's resistance is the 1956 Women's March against pass laws. This was a national mass action campaign which united women across races, and which culminated in the Women's March to the Union buildings to protest against the carrying of the pass. The emergence of the African National Congress Women's League (ANCWL) and the Federation of South African Women (FSAW and later FEDSAW), the Communist Party of South Africa, Black Sash, the United Women's Organisation, Black Women's Federation and many other organisations were key in the liberation struggle, but also challenged other discriminations

¹⁹ The women's movement does not refer to an unitary movement but rather to a range of intersecting activist organisations of women over the last few decades and particularly as part of the national democratic struggle.

including class and gender (Hassim, 2006; Walker, 1991). These organisations acknowledged the importance of achieving women's rights, yet grappled with and saw the immediacy of the struggle of national liberation (Britton & Fish, 2009). The mandate of FEDSAW was to work against racialised state oppression and to fight the discriminatory laws of the apartheid government, through women's activism. This mandate was balanced with the need to mobilise men in support of ending other forms of oppression, such as gender oppression, and not only discrimination based on race. The Black Sash, on the other hand, organised mainly on voting rights, human rights, forced resettlements, legal assistance to political prisoners and ending conscription.

In the period leading up to the negotiated settlement for a democratic South Africa, women mobilised under the umbrella body of the Women's National Coalition, and produced The Women's Charter of Rights. Women also made numerous submissions towards the process of developing South Africa's first democratic Constitution (Gouws, 2004a). Women wanted to ensure that their rights were encapsulated in the new Constitution and that women were well represented in the new government (Hassim, 2005b). The women's movement contributed significantly to the National Gender Machinery that was established after 1994, with the aim of ensuring that gender was mainstreamed in Government (Hassim, 2005b). The Constitution and the National Gender Machinery included the establishment of the Commission for Gender Equality, through section 187 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, No 108 of 1996 (see discussion in section 4.3.1). The function of the Commission for Gender Equality is to promote respect for gender equality and the protection, development and attainment of gender equality. The setting up of a gender machinery and the movement of a number of activists and feminists into the structures of Government had the unintended consequence of inactivity in women's organisations, and the over-reliance on women in government to change women's lives for the better (Gouws, 2004a).

Nelson Mandela, the first president of democratic South Africa, in his first State of the Nation address highlighted the importance of women's empowerment when he said: "It is vitally important that all structures of Government, including the President himself, should understand this fully that freedom cannot be achieved unless the women have been emancipated from all forms of oppression" (South African Government Information Website, n.d. n.p.). In raising the importance of understanding the emancipation of women from all forms of oppression, what Mandela is signalling is the question of women's freedom from patriarchy or gender equality. This interpretation is borne out by another speech given by Mandela two years later, in an address on South Africa's National Women's Day, when he said: "As long as women are bound by poverty and as long as they are looked down upon, human rights will lack substance" (Nelson Mandela Foundation, n.d., n.p). Mandela is also pointing to the intersection of women's gender freedom and poverty, an issue that was first raised by women's struggles and theorised by black and postcolonial feminists (e.g. Crenshaw, 1989; Hill Collins, 1990; hooks, 1995; Mohanty, 1988).



The realisation of gender equality was thus placed firmly on the agenda of the state. This would see the introduction of several pieces of legislation aimed at redressing the inequalities of the past, the establishment of structures through which gender equality would be achieved (national gender machinery), and the adoption of gender mainstreaming as a tool to achieve gender equality within and outside the State. The next section focuses on South Africa's gender legislative and policy framework. It briefly discusses the legislation introduced, which sought to improve the lives of women. Not all legislation is discussed here. I have selected legislation which specifically speaks to my theoretical frame, the capability approach, and the list of capabilities as identified by Nussbaum: life; bodily health; bodily integrity; senses, imagination and thought; emotions; practical reason; affiliation; other species; play; and control over one's environment (see discussion in Chapter Two). The section also looks at legislation and policy that can be classified

according to Fraser's trivalent view of justice which incorporates the "political dimension of representation alongside the economic dimension of distribution and the cultural dimension of recognition" (Fraser, 2005, p. 73) (see Chapter Two for a discussion).

4.3.1 South Africa's gender legislative and policy framework

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act No 108 of 1996, is the supreme piece of legislation in South Africa guaranteeing human rights and pursuing equality for all, and laying the foundations for a non-racist, non-sexist South Africa. In its founding provisions, the Constitution sets out the values on which a democratic South Africa is founded, and this includes the values of (a) "human dignity, the achievement of equality and the advancement of human rights and freedoms: (b) non-racialism and non-sexism" (section 1). The Bill of Rights in the Constitution is unequivocal in asserting the rights pertaining to equality. In section 9 of the Bill of Rights, the Constitution asserts, "everyone is equal before the law and has the right to equal protection and benefit of the law" (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996). Through the provisions of section 9, the State may take legislative and other measures to protect and advance persons who have been unfairly discriminated against. The Bill of Rights is most profound in its section dealing with discrimination, and denotes that the State may not unfairly discriminate against anyone (whether it is directly or indirectly) on the basis including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth.

The Constitution sets the overarching framework and provides the necessary provisions for the enactment of legislation that would ensure that the principle of equality is advanced, and that promotes the empowerment of women and

protects their rights. Since 1994, a various pieces legislation have been enacted which give effect to the equality provisions of the Constitution, as well as the international agreements that South Africa has ratified, and which have been discussed above. The legislation that has particular relevance to gender equality and happiness or women’s well-being will be discussed below.

Table 4: Legislation pertaining to gender (equality) and happiness

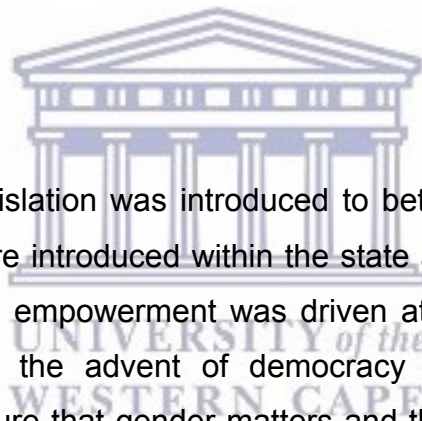
Legislation	Brief Overview
Basic Conditions of Employment Act 75 of 1997, including its amendments	The stated aim of the Act is to enhance social justice and economic development. The Act protects the labour rights of workers, including women, sets out and enforces the basic conditions of employment. It specifically makes provision for maternity leave and sets out provisions, which protect women before and after childbirth.
Choice on Termination of Pregnancy Act 92 of 1996	This allows for the legal termination of pregnancy on request by a pregnant woman for the first 12 weeks of pregnancy and under certain defined circumstances thereafter. It sets out the facilities where terminations can take place and provides that a medical practitioner or a registered midwife, who have undergone the necessary training, may carry out the termination.
Civil Union Act 17 of 2006	The Act regulates the formalization (solemnization) and registration of same-sex marriages.
Commission for Gender Equality Act 39 of 1996	The Act provides for the establishment of an institution, as set out in Chapter 9 of the Constitution. The Act, as amended in 2013, states that the Commission must promote respect for gender equality, and must, amongst others, promote the protection, development and the realisation of gender equality. The Act prescribes further powers to the Commission to monitor, investigate, conduct research, advise, lobby and report on matters of gender equality.
Criminal Law Amendment (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Act 32 of 2007	This Act aims to comprehensively deal with sexual offences in a single statute and repeals legislation in order to do so. It seeks to help intensify South Africa’s efforts to fight sexual crimes and exploitation against all persons and, especially, sexual offences being committed against vulnerable groups,

	including women, children and people who are mentally disabled. One of the significant changes that this legislation brought about is the repealing of the common law offence of rape and replacing it with an expanded statutory offence of rape, applicable to all forms of sexual penetration without consent, irrespective of gender. It further creates new statutory offences related to compelled acts of penetration or violence and makes provisions for sexual offences committed against children and persons with mental disabilities.
Criminal Procedure Second Amendment Act 75 of 1995	The Act sets out, amongst others, bail guidelines for arrested and accused persons. It also stipulates the conditions under which bail can be denied, which includes where there is a threat or potential for violence to be perpetrated and in cases where the accused is charged with rape.
Criminal Procedure Second Amendment Act 85 of 1997	The Act further tightens the existing bail provisions relating to serious crimes, including rape, murder and violence perpetrated against children.
Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998	The purpose of the Act is to afford the victims of domestic abuse maximum protection under the law and to strengthen protection against domestic violence. It includes a broad definition of a domestic relationship, which does not for example, only refer to a marital relationship or a heterosexual relationship. Through this Act, persons are afforded greater protection against actual or threatened physical violence, sexual, emotional, verbal, psychological and economic abuse as well as intimidation, harassment, stalking, damage to or destruction of property, or entry into their home without consent. The Act further makes provision for the issuing of protection orders against the perpetrators and for the arrest of a person at the site of domestic violence, without a warrant, where the peace officer has reason to believe that the person committed an offence with violence against the complainant.
Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998	The purpose of the Act is to address equity in the workplace by promoting equal opportunity and fair treatment in employment. The Act seeks to do this through the implementation of affirmative action measures targeting designated groups, which includes black people, women and persons of disabilities.
Film and Publications Act	The Act makes it an offence to distribute publications or films

65 of 1996	which advocate hatred based on race, gender, ethnicity or religion and which will incite others to cause harm or incite violence, and advocates propaganda for war. It further protects children from exposure to disturbing or harmful materials and from early exposure to what is deemed adult experience. In addition, the Act makes it an offence to expose children or make use of children in pornography.
Firearms Control Act 60 of 2000	The Act enables the State to remove illegally possessed firearms from society, control supply, possession, storage and transportation and use of firearms and to detect and punish the negligent and criminal use thereof. The Act sets out circumstances where a person is unfit to possess a firearm. These circumstances include where a person has been issued with a final protection order in terms of the Domestic Violence Act, or a final protection order in terms of the Protection from Harassment Act, where the person has the intention to kill him or herself or any other person using a firearm or another dangerous weapon or because of the person's mental condition or inclination to violence, amongst others.
Maintenance Act 99 of 1998	The Act sets out the legal duty that a person may have to maintain another person. This allows the court to order an employer to deduct maintenance from the salary of the person who is issued with a maintenance order. It allows the court to appoint maintenance officers who can trace the whereabouts of the persons responsible for maintaining another, serve documents and to gather information on the financial position of both parties.
Preferential Procurement Policy Framework Act 5 of 2000	This ensures that Government implements a procurement policy that provides for the advancement of persons previously discriminated against, including on the basis of race, gender and disability.
Prevention and Combating of Trafficking in Person Act 7 of 2013	Whilst trafficking of persons have been addressed in many different pieces of legislation, the Act provides the first single piece of legislation to address human trafficking. The Act provides for the prevention, protection and assistance to victims of trafficking, as well as for the prosecution of persons who commit offences related to trafficking. The Act also sets penalties for persons convicted as per the Act to a maximum of R100 million or life imprisonment.

<p>Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act 4 of 2000:</p>	<p>As indicated above, section 9 of the Bill of Rights in the Constitution states that the State may not unfairly discriminate on the basis of race, gender, pregnancy, amongst others. The Constitution further states that the State must give effect to equality through the enactment of national legislation. This Act seeks to give effect to the provisions of section 9 of the Constitution. The objectives of the Act include the promotion of equality, the prevention and prohibition of unfair discrimination, redress for discrimination and progressive eradication of discrimination, which includes discrimination on the basis of gender, sex, race, pregnancy, marital status, sexual orientation, amongst others. Section 8 of this Act makes specific reference to the prohibition of unfair discrimination on the basis of gender. It includes, inter alia, discrimination through gender based violence, female genital mutilation, systems where women are prevented from inheriting property, any practice – which could include customary, religious or traditional – which undermines equality between women and men and impacts negatively on the dignity of women.</p>
<p>Protection from Harassment Act 17 of 2011</p>	<p>The Act gives effect to the Constitutional provisions which state that everyone has the right to freedom and security of person and has the right to be free from all forms of violence, which would include sexual violence from either public or private sources (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, section 12). The Act offers victims of harassment remedies against harassment and includes provisions for protection orders. The Act defines harassment very clearly as behavior of a person, which he or she knows or should know which may directly or indirectly cause harm or lead to others to believe that harm may be caused. Though the Act women (as victims) thus have recourse against any conduct considered as harassment as defined in the Act.</p>
<p>Recognition of Customary Marriages Act 120 of 1998</p>	<p>This Act abolishes the minority status of women married under customary law and abolishes the marital power of husbands as guardians. It further recognises and offers protection to women who are in customary and polygamous marriages.</p>

Considering the legislation and various international instruments that South Africa has acceded to, as well as the results from the various gender indices discussed above, one could arguably state that South Africa has been successful in achieving *de jure* gender equality. The State, through participation and sometimes activism of women's groups, feminists, civil society more broadly and academia, have effected a comprehensive package of legislation that gives effect to *de jure* gender equality. For this, South Africa can be hailed and South Africa can be seen as a beacon of hope when it comes to women's rights as human rights. But the enactment of legislation is but one of the cornerstones of the realisation of gender equality. The other cornerstone is whether there is *de facto* gender equality. How has the enactment and implementation of the legislation impacted on women's lives? This is ultimately one of the questions of this study, and will be considered in the analysis of the data.



Whilst a plethora of legislation was introduced to better the lives of women, further mechanisms were introduced within the state and outside of the state to ensure that women's empowerment was driven at an operation level. As noted above, following the advent of democracy in 1994, there was a considered drive to ensure that gender matters and the attainment of gender equality became imbedded as a goal within the state. Largely based on the role that the women's movement as a whole had played, and in particular the Women's National Coalition, gender activists and feminists, Cabinet adopted South Africa's National Policy Framework for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality in 2000. The framework placed the achievement of gender equality as a key objective addressing inequalities of the past, and became the principal document outlining the process for the realisation of gender equality.

The National Policy Framework for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality gave birth to The National Gender Machinery (NGM) – the NGM

refers to a set of co-ordinated structures within and outside government, the aim of which was to achieve equality for women in all spheres of life i.e. political, civil, social, economic and cultural. These structures were located in Government (Office of the Status of Women, gender focal points within departments), Parliament²⁰ (Women's Caucus, Joint Monitoring Committee on the Improvement of Quality of Life and Status of Women), independent bodies (Commission for Gender Equality, Constitutional Court), and civil society at a national, provincial and local level. The Commission for Gender Equality was established as part of the gender machinery and gave effect to a Constitutional provision as one of the independent bodies that would monitor gender equality. Through the structures set in place, it was envisaged that women would have the ability to influence policies and the programme of the State, as well as hold the State accountable to women (Hassim, 2003). The NGM was considered to be one of the most integrated and advanced set of structures worldwide (Gouws, 2005)²¹. Gender mainstreaming was the tool adopted by the NGM through which gender equality would be advanced.

Gender mainstreaming is the process which takes into account the implications of any policy, programme, legislation for women and men. Gender mainstreaming was endorsed as the strategic approach to attain gender equality at the 1995 Beijing Conference for Women. However, concerns have been raised by some feminists about the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming (Gouws, 2005a; Walby, 2005). Criticism levelled against gender mainstreaming relates to the depoliticisation of gender activism, and that gender mainstreaming becomes a technical process

²⁰ In 2017, the structures in Parliament were the Portfolio Committee on Women in the Presidency, The Multi-party Women's Caucus and the Select Committee on Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs, which is tasked with dealing with gender matters.

²¹ The different structures of the NGM achieved various levels of success, including the development of a national gender policy, inputting on the passing of legislation that impacted positively on the lives of women, building partnerships with women's organisations, amongst others (see Gouws, 2006). The NGM was, however, plagued by many challenges that made it near dysfunctional. These included overlaps in mandate, inability to hold government to account, the placement of gender focal points and the lack of authority of the gender focal points due to the level that staff were appointed at, lack of gender expertise within focal points, failure to implement gender policies, amongst others (see Gouws, 2006; Gouws, n.d.; Hassim, 2003)

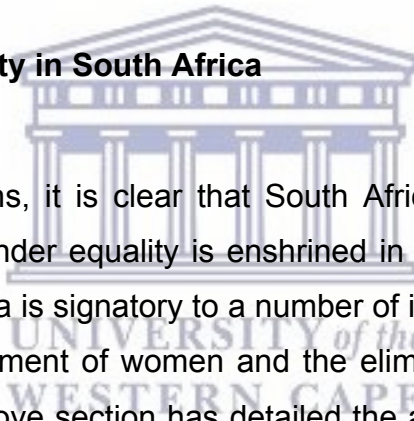
implemented by technocrats (Gouws, 2005a; Gouws, n.d.). Gender mainstreaming thus becomes a depoliticised, mechanistic framework, with specific indicators purporting to measure gender equality, but which fails to actively engage men and women as subjects of their own equality and as actors for change (Liebowitz & Zwingel, 2014). Within this instrumentalist approach, statistics (seen as scientific and objective) count, whilst ignoring the affective and material realities of women (and men). A further critique against gender mainstreaming offered by Walby (2005) is that, given the intersection of gender inequality with other inequalities faced by women such as race and class, the multiple inequalities faced by women would pose challenges for gender mainstreaming practically, and that gender mainstreaming might not be able to take the multiple inequalities faced by women into account.

At the 52nd National Conference of the African National Congress (ANC) in 2007, a resolution was passed that the ANC should consider the establishment of a Women's Ministry. Following this resolution, a Ministry for Women, Children and Persons with Disabilities was established in 2009, no longer just a Ministry for Women. The Department's mandate was to "promote and protect the rights, dignity, empowerment and equality for women, children and persons with disabilities" (Republic of South Africa, 2010, p.8). As noted by Gouws (n.d.), the establishment of a Women's Ministry was unexpected, given the institutionalisation of a national gender machinery. Gender activists were concerned that a Women's Ministry would become unnecessary and become a dumping ground for women's issues. The Department was beset with problems, only receiving a budget in 2010, with a lack of staff and the delayed appointment of a Director-General (Republic of South Africa, 2010). Following the 2014 general elections, the Department of Women was established replacing the Department of Women, Children and Persons with Disabilities. This Ministry for Women was located in the Presidency. The expectation was that given its location, women's empowerment would receive the necessary attention and importance, and that we would see the acceleration of women's empowerment. The National Policy Framework for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality continues to guide the work of

the Department, and gender mainstreaming remains the strategic tool through which to achieve gender equality.

This section considered the various pieces of legislation, policy and machinery set in place to accelerate gender equality and women's empowerment. The mechanisms, legislation and policies have been far-reaching and comprehensive. Theoretically, with such structures and systems in place, the lives of women should have improved for the better. However, women are still the hardest hit by inequality and poverty. In section 4.4.2, I provide a brief look at the challenges and advances that women have made and continue to face in the political, economic and social spheres.

4.4.2 Gender (in)equality in South Africa



From the above sections, it is clear that South Africa has taken significant steps to ensure that gender equality is enshrined in its legislative and policy frameworks. South Africa is signatory to a number of international agreements promoting the empowerment of women and the elimination of discrimination against women. The above section has detailed the actions that South Africa has embarked upon to deliver on its constitutional mandate of gender equality. This section will briefly look at whether these legislative and policy achievements have translated into progress in the daily lives of women. The section considers the status of women in the political, economic and social spheres, and further outlines challenges women continue to face.

4.4.2.1 Political sphere

If we were to look only at the representation of women in the democratic South African Government, one could argue that gender equality has been realised or almost fully realised in the political sphere. The representation of

women in the Executive, Legislature and Judiciary has increased significantly since apartheid, which can be ascribed to the concerted efforts by feminists, activists and femocrats within the state, amongst others, to ensure that women are represented in positions of decision-making. It can also be ascribed to the African National Congress, the ruling party, adopting a quota system for the number of women to be represented on party lists. The current quota is for 50/50 parity. In other words, women should make up at least 50% of representation on party lists (of the ANC). This is also in keeping with the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development. Some scholars, such as Hassim (2003), have argued that perhaps most of the gains that women have made have been in the Parliamentary arena.

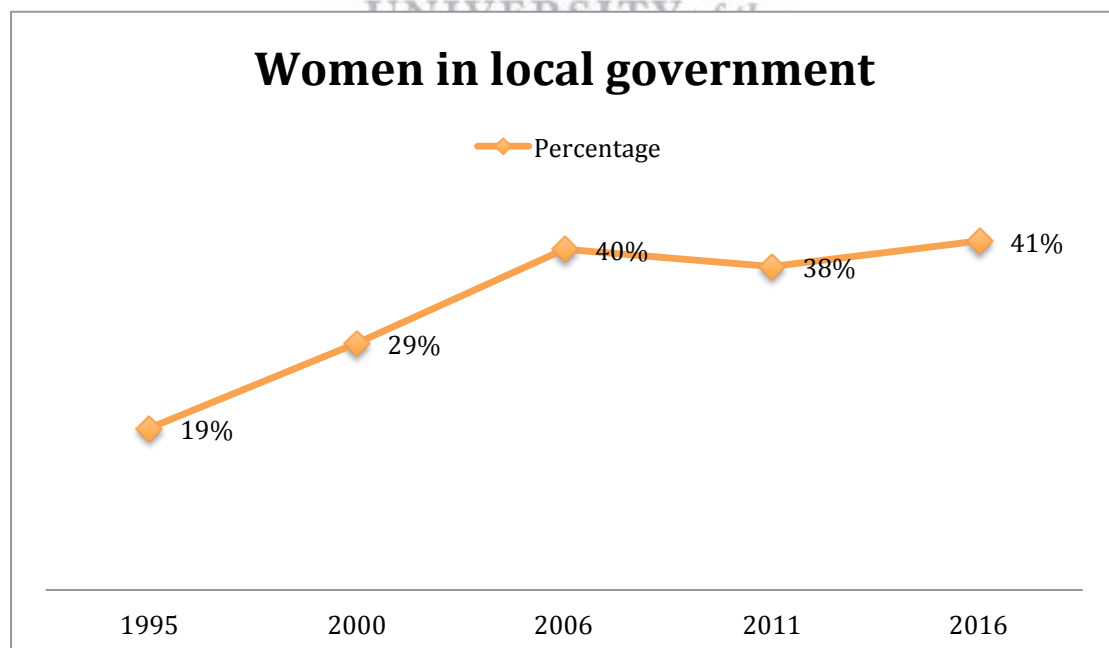
Since 1994, there has been a steady increase in the number of women in government (Gouws, n.d.). Women have taken up a number of seats in Parliament, the Executive and the Judiciary. This upward trajectory is seen in Parliament where, prior to 1994, women only held 2.7% of the seats in the National Assembly (Levendal, 2014). Following the elections in 2014, women comprised 42% of the elected representatives in the National Assembly and 35.2% in the National Council of Provinces (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2016). However, the number of women representatives in Parliament declined after the 2014 elections, having comprised 45% in the general elections of 2009 (Schultz-Herzenberg, 2014). This drop in percentage, whilst seemingly small, was significant as it meant that the 50/50 target was not reached and impacted on the achievement of targets set in the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development (Lowe Morna, Mbadhlanyana, Ndlovu & Robinson, 2014). In 2017, South Africa ranked ninth on the IPU rankings of the number of women in Parliament (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2016). This is important for this study, as the number of women in Parliament is considered one of the indicators of gender equality.

Following the 2014 national elections, 41% of the ministerial positions were held by women, which was unchanged from the 2009 elections (Lowe Morna et al., 2014). There was an increase in the number of women in deputy minister positions in the 2014 elections, with the number increasing from 39% to 44% (Lowe Morna et al., 2014). A number of these ministerial positions held by women are in the non-traditional sectors, including Science and Technology, Public Enterprises, International Relations and Co-operation, Labour, Defence and Energy. This is a significant feat for women.

Since 1995, with the exception of the 2011 local government elections, we observe a steady increase in the number of women representatives in local government. 2011 saw a slight dip in the percentage of women elected but this increased in the elections held in 2016. The overall representation of women in local government is depicted below:

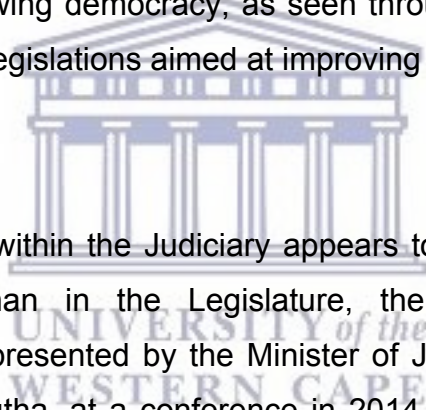


Figure 3: Women representatives in local government



Source: Compiled from Hicks, Lowe Morna & Fonnah (2016)

A critical mass of women (numbers of women) in positions of decision-making is imperative if change is to be made in policies, programmes and legislation, which impact positively on the lives of women. From the discussions above, we note that there has been a steady increase in the number of women representatives in government. Most notable has been the increase in the number of women representatives in the Legislature, Executive and in local government. This is a positive development, yet it is by no means a guarantee that women's lives would change for the better. As has been argued by Gouws (2004b), whilst a critical mass is important, an even more important element is that women's voices are heard, that their interests, perspectives and experiences are voiced so as to bring about a shift, and change the power and culture of institutions (Gouws, 2004b). One may arrive at the conclusion that women's voices certainly have been heard, especially in the years immediately following democracy, as seen through the enactment of a number of progressive legislations aimed at improving the lives of women.




Gender transformation within the Judiciary appears to have progressed at a much slower pace than in the Legislature, the Executive and local government. Statistics presented by the Minister of Justice and Correctional Services, Adv. M. Masutha, at a conference in 2014, indicate that since the advent of democracy, only 76 out of the 311 new judges appointed were women (South African Chapter of the International Association of Women Judges, n.d.). Women comprised 1 841 out of 5 708 practising advocates on the roll of advocates, and at the end of 2013, there were less than 6 000 practising female attorneys out of 22 500 (South African Chapter of the International Association of Women Judges, n.d.). At the end of October 2012, only 28% of national judicial officers were women, and since 1994, on average, only three to four women have been appointed annually as judges (Democratic Governance and Rights Unit at the University of Cape Town, 2013). Based on figures at the end of July 2014, women comprised 32.5% of the total number of judges (Ntlama, n.d.). These figures clearly indicated that the judiciary still has some way to go towards gender transformation. Purely

on the basis of representation in the judiciary, gender parity has not been achieved.

Representation of women in the political arena speaks to many of the indices as well as the domains that measure or provide an indication of gender equality. South Africa has not attained 50/50 parity in the representation of women in the public and private spheres as set out in the quota's set by the ANC, as well as in the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development. However, in the 24 years of democracy, great strides have been made in this respect. Looking at this aspect of gender equality, the country is doing relatively well.

4.4.2.2 Economic sphere



Participation in the labour force is a key indicator of gender equality. In the 2014 Vulnerable Groups Indicators Report, Statistics South Africa (2014) reported that females head 41.3% of all households over the age of 15 years. The Report indicated that out of all SA households, 27.3% had no employed persons in the household, compared to 40.3% of all female-headed households that had no employed persons (Statistics South Africa, 2014). Of the female population who were employed in 2014, 68.1% were employed in the formal sector, 14.3% in the informal sector, 3.1% in the agricultural sector and 14.5% as domestic workers. From the above we see that the majority of females (68.1%) were employed in the formal sector, although the numbers of women in the informal, agricultural sectors and domestic workers are high (31.9%). In comparison, 25.5% of all employed males are in these sectors, with 74.6% being in the formal sector. The number of female-headed households who had no employed persons is quite high, and provides an indication of the poverty experienced in female-headed households. More females than males are employed outside of the formal sectors and are thus

more vulnerable to poverty. When considering the unemployment rate in South Africa, females comprised 27.8% of the unemployed, with the figures for unemployed females being highest amongst black (Africans) and coloureds.

From the report, we note that women are over-represented in the lowest income group, earning between R1 and R1 500. There is a slight increase in the parity ratios for income groups R7 501 – R11 500 and above. This could possibly be ascribed to affirmative action measures being implemented. Overall, women find themselves under-represented in the higher income earnings groups.

4.4.2.3 Social sphere

In this section, I briefly look at educational levels, health, living conditions, crime and violence, as these indicators are often used as measures of gender equality.



Given South Africa's recent apartheid past, the functional literacy levels are quite high, with 85.3% of all males and 83.2% of females respectively being functionally literate (Statistics South Africa, 2014). The country has further made considerable progress since 1994 in ensuring universal access to education. When considering the educational attainment levels for persons over 25 years of age, we see that 58.6% of the female population over 25 years have less than matric, 25.2% have matric, 8.1% have other tertiary qualifications, 6.7% are graduates and 1.4% have other qualifications (Statistics South Africa, 2014). The majority of women thus have low levels of schooling, which would have an impact on the types of employment that they would be able to enter, and is likely to be low skilled and low level paying

informal jobs. Of this population, we see that the majority of black women have less than a matric (64.8%), with only 4.3% being graduates; 61.3% of coloured women have less than a matric certificate, with 4.6% being graduates; 36.2% of indian/asian women have less than a matric qualification and 15.7% are graduates; and 20% of white women have less than a matric qualification, with 21.8% being graduates (Statistics South Africa, 2014). Thus, the majority of black and coloured women over the age of 25 years find themselves with low levels of schooling, and thus vulnerable to poverty.

Goal 3 of the Sustainable Development Goals focuses on healthy lives and well-being for all. In particular, one of the targets relates to maternal health and specifically, to reduce, by 2030, the maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 100 000 live births. Whilst there has been a downward trend in the maternal mortality ratio from 176.22 per 100 000 live births in 2008–2010 to 154.06 per 100 000 live births in 2011–2013, it seems unlikely that this target will be met (Republic of South Africa, 2016b). Too many women are still dying from maternal mortality, which in many instances, can be prevented.



Looking at the living conditions of female-headed households, we see that 69.2% have access to water, 80.4% access to sanitation, 60.5% access to refuse/waste collection, 88% access to electricity, and 14.9% used solid fuels for cooking (Statistics South Africa, 2014). At least a third of female-headed households still do not have access to water and refuse/waste collection. This is a significant number. This undoubtedly impacts on female-headed household time spent on these activities, as well as on their overall living conditions, which is not satisfactory.

Crime and violence more generally, and gender-based violence in particular, are of great concern in South Africa. The results of the Victims of Crime

Survey (Statistics South Africa, 2017b) show that households considered housebreaking/burglary²² and home robbery as the most common and most feared crimes. Important for this study is crime committed against women.

In the table and figures below, the sexual offences statistics are provided. It is important to note that this provides an overall picture, albeit with some limitations, over a ten-year period. The figures are also not disaggregated by sex or by sexual offence. Sexual offences, for the period April 2008 onwards, include rape, sexual assault, attempted sexual offences and contact sexual offences.



²² The distinction between housebreaking/burglary and home robbery is that in housebreaking there is no contact between the victim and the perpetrator, whereas in home robbery, there is contact between the victim and the perpetrator.

Table 5: SAPS Sexual Offences Statistics

	April 2005 to March 2006	April 2006 to March 2007	April 2007 to March 2008	April 2008 to March 2009	April 2009 to March 2010	April 2010 to March 2011	April 2011 to March 2012	April 2012 to March 2013	April 2013 to March 2014	April 2014 to March 2015	April 2015 to March 2016
Total Sexual Offences	67 064	64 071	62 284	69 197	66 992	64 921	60 539	60 888	56 680	53 617	51 895
Change in %		-4.46%	-2.78%	11.09%	-3.18%	-3.09%	-6.74%	0.57%	-6.91%	-5.4%	-3.21%

Source: Compiled from Republic of South Africa, 2016a

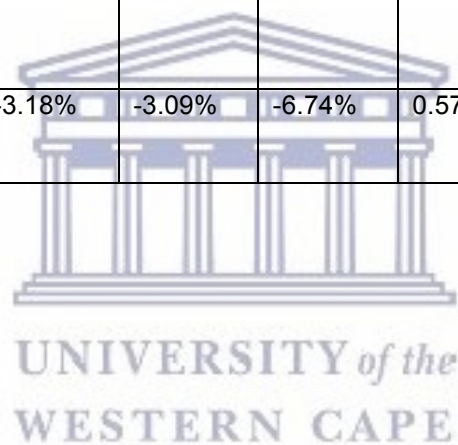
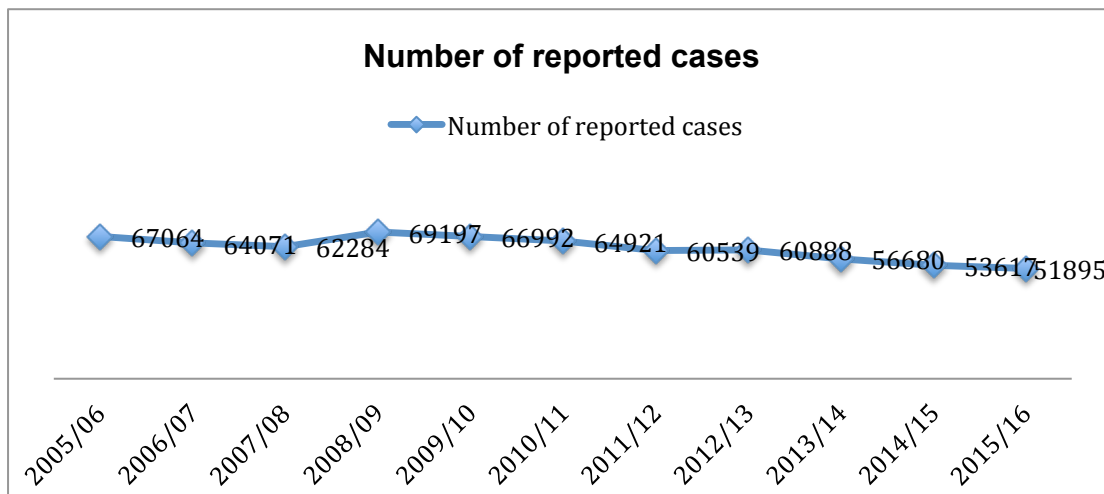


Figure 4: Number of reported cases of sexual offences



Source: Republic of South Africa, 2016a.

The sexual offences statistics presented in Table 5 and Figure 4 provide the trends over a ten-year period. When interpreting the results, it is important to note the Criminal Law Amendment (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Act 32 of 2007 was enacted and came into effect in December 2007. As mentioned in section 4.3.1, the Act expanded the definition of rape. It also introduced new sexual offences related to acts of penetration or violence. Thus the figures prior to implementation of the Act cannot be compared to the figures as from April 2008 onwards. Furthermore, cognisance should be taken that prior to April 2008 to March 2009, the statistics included cases that were detected as a result of police action. This is now reported on as a separate category of crimes detected as a result of police action.

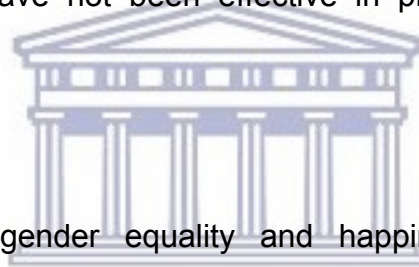
What the above figures tell us is that the incidents of reported sexual offences are high. For the first three years reported on above, there is a downward trend in the number of sexual offences incidents. We see a sharp increase in the reported cases in April 2008 to March 2009, which is as a result of expanded definition of rape, as well as the inclusion of other categories of

sexual offences. Notwithstanding, the figures indicate that there has been a decrease in the number of reported cases from April 2008 to March 2016.

The statistics have been criticised by a number of gender activists. Firstly, activists and researchers have long indicated that sexual offences, and in particular rape, are under-reported. Quoted in a recent newspaper article on the 2016 statistics, Vetten notes that one in nine women report rape, and thus the apparent reduction in rape is not an indication of what is happening in society, but rather an indication that women choose not to report rape (Mapumulo, 2016). Research has also shown us that rapes, and one can include sexual offences more broadly, are often not reported, due to a number of barriers which include fear of not being believed, police persuading women not to open rape cases, and little success in conviction of perpetrators or cases going to court (Jewkes & Abrahams, 2002). The under-reporting claims are further supported by results from the Victims of Crime Survey (Statistics South Africa, 2017b), which shows declining levels of households levels of satisfaction with the police and with courts. It has also been noted that the most common forms of sexual coercion, such as that which occurs in marriage, friendship or if there is bribery involved, often go unreported to the police (Jewkes & Abrahams, 2002). Anecdotal evidence further supports claims that police are sometimes reluctant to open rape or sexual offences dockets (Mapumulo, 2017), possibly as this may reflect negatively on the crime statistics produced annually. It is thus important to emphasise the fact that the statistics reflect reported cases of sexual offences, and not the actual number of sexual offences incidents occurring.

Besides rape and other sexual offences, murder is the most extreme consequence of gender-based violence. Whilst both women and men can be perpetrators of femicide, most reported cases of femicide in South Africa, as elsewhere, are of women being killed by an intimate male partner (Krug, Dahlberg, Mercy, Zwi & Lozano, 2002). A 1999 study found that the overall

rate of female homicides in South Africa was 24 per 100 000, six times higher than the global rate of four per 100 000 (Abrahams, Jewkes, Martin, Mathews, Vetten & Lombard, 2009). However, there appears to be a decline in the incidence of intimate partner violence over the ten-year period in South Africa. In 1999, Naeemah Abrahams and her colleagues showed that a woman is killed by her partner every six hours (Abrahams et al., 2009; Mathews, Abrahams, Martin, Vetten, Van Der Merwe & Jewkes, 2004). Ten years later, in 2009, Abrahams and colleagues reported that a woman is killed by her partner every eight hours (Abrahams, Matthews, Jewkes, Martin & Lombard, 2012). Even with this apparent decline, the rate of femicide remains high. Despite legislation that has been introduced to prevent violence against women (Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998, Criminal Law Amendment (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Act 32 of 2007), it is clear that prevention strategies have not been effective in preventing gender-based violence.



Violence impacts on gender equality and happiness. It prevents and constrains women from attaining gender equality. Furthermore, in keeping with the capabilities approach discussed in Chapter Two, violence impacts on women's functioning (achievements, outcomes) and capabilities (the freedom to achieve something or women's opportunities).

4.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have looked at three global gender instruments to which countries have made commitments. I have further discussed the African regional protocols, declarations and charters that provide an indication and undertaking to women's empowerment and gender equality. The intention of being a signatory to these international instruments and the commitments made is to ensure or give effect to these commitments in domestic legislation,

policies, and constitutions, amongst others. It should be noted that many of the protocols, etc., are not legally binding. Yet, states which are signatory to these instruments have indicated their commitment to the realisation of gender equality and the elimination of discrimination. It is against this backdrop that this chapter has considered the evidence presented through the various indices measuring gender inequality and gender gaps. Notwithstanding the concerns that I raised about the quality of data and indicators used to measure gender equality, we see some definite improvements in the lives of women globally. However, many challenges remain for women, notably in political participation, as well as economic participation and opportunities.

Turning to South Africa, from the discussions above, we can see that the country has implemented a number of the international and regional commitments through the enactment of national legislation and policies, etc. This commitment is evident in the constitution of the country, to which women of South Africa contributed significantly, to ensure that women's concerns and voices were heard. I have outlined several pieces of legislation and institutional structures set up, and noted that gender mainstreaming has been adopted as a strategic tool, to ensure that gender equality became a feature of South Africa's landscape. One could thus reasonably argue that, taking this legislative landscape into account, formal gender equality has been realised. How this positive development has translated into women's everyday lives is another matter, as is seen by the research presented on the challenges that continue to face women in the economic, and social spheres. Women continue to disproportionately face high levels of violence and continue to face poverty, which impacts on gender equality and happiness.

Chapter Five: Studying gender equality and happiness: Research methodology

5.1 Introduction

When I tell people that I'm doing a PhD, they often ask what the study is about. My response, "I am studying gender equality and happiness", has led to at least one reply of disbelief, "Does gender equality make women happy", this from a male acquaintance. Other questions have been a bit harder to answer: "why gender equality and happiness"? My response was initially a faltering one. Sometimes I would say that "I am interested in gender equality and what women make of it and whether it has brought about change and happiness in women's lives". Engaging with the literature has provided me with a far more substantive and grounded answer. Now, I answer a bit more confidently, "I am interested in gender equality and happiness from a feminist perspective. I am interested in matters of social justice. I am interested in what women have to say about their lives. And I am interested in making a possible change in social policy, which will contribute towards making women more happy". I am thus positioning my research within a feminist research framework.

As indicated in previous chapters, this is a feminist study on gender equality and happiness (also referred to as subjective well-being or life satisfaction). In this chapter, I will locate my study within a feminist research framework. I will present a brief outline of feminist methodology. I will discuss the mixed methods approach that I employ in the study and will set out the research aims. I will further present the data collection methods as well as data analysis techniques that were employed in the study. In addition, I consider the ethical considerations that guide this study, and reflect on my position as researcher and the research process.

5.2 A feminist research framework

Feminist researchers differ in what they consider good research and appropriate methods. However, as some have argued, feminist research is based on epistemological critiques of dominant conceptions of knowledge (Banister, Burman, Parker, Taylor & Tindall, 1994). Hesse-Biber (2007) notes that feminist researchers have long drawn attention to androcentric biases in research in the social sciences. With regard to South Africa, this contention is supported by Bennett (2008), who argues that feminist research's "fundamental concern has been to address and transform the impact of androcentricity on scholarly mindsets, practices, and writings and to engage directly in work aimed at addressing discriminations and injustices" (p. 4).

One cannot speak of *the* feminist epistemology or feminist methodology. Feminist researchers have worked across epistemologies and methodologies, as will be discussed below. Notwithstanding, there are a number of principles that guide feminist research. Feminist research: 1) foregrounds gender as a basic feature in social life and thus foregrounds it in the research undertaken; 2) is concerned with consciousness-raising; 3) troubles the norm of objectivity, and that the personal can be separated from that which is being researched; 4) acknowledges that the truth is multiple and partial; 5) recognises that women have often been exploited as objects of knowledge; and 6) aims to empower women and transform patriarchal relations and social institutions (Fonow & Cook, 2005).

Some of the early feminist challenges to the mainstream positivist manner in which research was conducted come from feminist empiricists. Feminist empiricist researchers were instrumental in pointing out the androcentric biases in traditional empirical research. Yet feminist empiricists have embraced positivist paradigms. This essentially means that feminist empiricists believed that positivism had value to add. Feminist empiricism

contends that some of the problems with positivist science arise from *how* it is carried out. They were conscious of not simply adding women to empirical research inquiries. The premise of the argument made by feminist empiricists was that research could be done better and with more rigour.

Contrary to feminist empiricism, some feminist researchers indicated that following the tradition of positivist research leads to “bad science” (Hesse-Biber, 2007, p. 7). These feminists challenge positivist stances that science conducted within this worldview is objective, value-free, findings can be generalised and a universal truth exists (Hesse-Biber, 2007).

Notwithstanding these critiques, with which I am aligned in part, I have employed quantitative methods in this study, I do not believe that the use of quantitative methods definitively characterises a researcher as a feminist empiricist. I align myself with Haraway (1988), Harding (1993) and Bhavnani (1993) who challenge the notion of a value-free science and objectivity in science. Objectivity needs to be transformed into a “feminist objectivity”, which implies that “knowledge and truth are partial, situated, subjective, power imbued and relational” (Hesse-Biber, 2007, p. 9; also see Haraway, 1988, p. 581, on the concept of “situated knowledges”). Furthermore, as Hesse-Biber (2007) argues, the denial of values, biases and politics in research is unrealistic and undesirable.

The idea of feminist objectivity ties in with Harding’s (1993) notion of “strong objectivity”, which recognises that all knowledge comes from a particular point of view (also see Hesse-Biber, 2007). Harding further argues that throughout the research process the researcher makes subjective judgements. However, she argues that researchers have to be aware of their own situated location and be reflexive throughout the research process. Strong objectivity thus requires that researchers are axiologically aware, meaning researchers must reflect and be aware of their values, attitudes and own agenda’s throughout

the research process. As stated by Hesse-Biber, “it is in the process of strong self-reflexivity that the researcher becomes more objective” (Hesse-Biber, 2007, p. 9).

The challenges against positivism led to the emergence of feminist standpoint theories in the 1970s and 1980s. Feminist standpoint epistemologies borrow from the “Marxist and Hegelian idea that individuals’ daily activities or material, lived experiences structure their understanding of the world” (Hesse-Biber, 2007, p. 10). Harding (2007) points out that standpoint epistemology posits a number of key arguments that exemplify it. Firstly, it notes that “knowledge and power are internally linked; they co-constitute and co-maintain each other” (p. 50). Secondly, standpoint epistemology holds that where societies are structured hierarchically, for example by race, ethnicity, class, sexuality or gender, the understandings that the ‘rulers’ and the ‘ruled’ have will be opposed. However, can this argument not be challenged? Even in a society where hierarchies exist, it is possible that strong reflexivity or self-awareness of one’s pet theories could assist one in one’s understanding. I would thus argue that if we were sufficiently reflexive, the understandings of the ‘rulers’ and the ‘ruled’ would not necessarily be opposed.

Thirdly, according to standpoint epistemology, the views of the oppressors are made to be real, and people are forced to live in societies in which the view of the oppressor are dominant, and made to serve the needs of the oppressor. Fourthly, it is argued that both science and politics are needed to get a fuller understanding of society. Lastly, “standpoint brings the possibility of liberation” (Harding, 2007, p. 51).

As indicated, my study is firmly rooted within a feminist framework. This study on gender equality and happiness stems from a desire to address the very injustices and discriminations to which Bennett (2008) and Fonow and Cook

(2005) refer. It does this from the point of view of women, who are best placed to address the meaning of these matters for themselves, from their perspectives. My study thus acknowledges women's meaning-making, but more than that it brings women in as active knowers or agents of knowledge, thus going against traditional epistemologies, which have not viewed women as generators of knowledge. As posited by Harding (1987), "feminists have argued that traditional epistemologies, whether intentionally or unintentionally, systematically exclude the possibility that women could be "knowers" or agents of knowledge, they claim that the voice of science is a masculine one; that history is written mainly from the point of view of men (of the dominant class and race); that the subject of traditional sociological science is always assumed to be a man" (p. 3).

While I am informed by feminist standpoint epistemology, and take cognisance of the ongoing debates within feminist methodologies, my study used mixed methods to examine the research questions. I employed quantitative methods alongside qualitative tools as part of a mixed methods approach. Given the critiques set out above, some feminists could view the use of quantitative techniques as positivist and I could be viewed as a feminist empiricist. If the use of quantitative tools *only* were to characterise me as feminist empiricist, then this would be correct. I am convinced that the use of quantitative methods, as one method of data collection in my study, would be most effective in answering some of my research questions, a point which is supported by Hesse-Biber (2010) and to which I now turn.

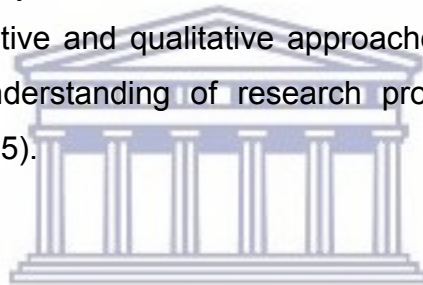
5.3 Research design: Mixed methods research

As argued above, mixed methods are not necessarily antagonistic to feminist research. Hesse-Biber (2010) argues that mixed methods can potentially provide feminist researchers with a set of techniques for feminist knowledge construction. As she contends, mixed methods "are not inherently feminist or

non-feminist” (Hesse-Biber, 2010, p. 170). Rather mixed methods are techniques that are employed to answer specific research questions.

A number of definitions of mixed methods are offered in the literature. Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) have defined mixed methods research as:

a research design with philosophical assumptions as well as methods of inquiry. As a methodology, it involves the philosophical assumptions that guide the direction of the collection and analysis and the mixture of qualitative and quantitative approaches in many phases of the research project. As a method, it focuses on collecting, analysing and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or series of studies. Its central premise is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches, in combination, provides better understanding of research problems than either approach alone (p. 5).



In light of the implicit hope to contribute to policy debates on gender equality and women’s subjective well-being, I am in agreement with particularly the premise of mixed methods identified by the two authors. The combination of focus group discussions, key informant interviews, and survey methods offers a rich understanding of women’s life satisfaction and gender equality.

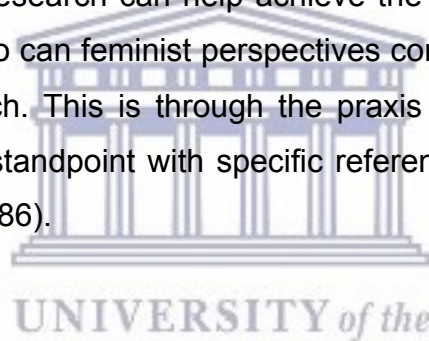
Johnson, Onwuegbuzie and Turner (2007) have offered a similar definition of mixed methods research to the above authors. “Mixed methods research is the type of research in which a researcher or a team of researchers combines elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches (e.g. use of qualitative and quantitative viewpoints, data collection, analysis, inference techniques) for the purposes of the breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration” (p. 123).

Teddlie and Tashakkori (2010) identified a number of characteristics of this method, which also serves as rationale for the mixed methods approach of this study. Those characteristics, which this study draws on, are discussed. One of the characteristics is that of methodological eclecticism, which refers to the selection and integration of the most appropriate techniques from a range of quantitative and qualitative and mixed methods to study the phenomenon more closely (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2010). As will be discussed below, qualitative methods are best suited to explore participants' perceptions, experiences and understanding of gender equality and happiness in their lives. The quantitative methods best answer the questions relating to the potential relationship between gender equality and happiness.

A second characteristic which is applicable to my study emphasises “diversity at all levels of the research enterprise” (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2010, p. 9). This refers to the ability of mixed methods research to address questions of a confirmatory or exploratory nature, hence allowing for divergent conclusions and inferences to be made, depending on the complexity of the data sources and analyses. As will be discussed in Chapter Ten, the results emanating from the qualitative and quantitative methods have been used in support of each other, as well as to show the divergence of views as emanating from the different aspects of the research. Another characteristic is a focus on the research question or problem, which then assists in determining the methods used within the study. As already indicated, the research question is what determined the particular methods used in the study. Teddlie and Tashakkori (2010, p. 10) further refer to a “set of basic signature research designs and analytical processes”. These designs have also been called concurrent, simultaneous and triangulation designs (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2010). As will be discussed below, this study employs a concurrent triangulation strategy as the particular type of mixed methods research.

The characteristics of the mixed methods approach provide a clear rationale regarding the potential in using both qualitative as well as quantitative

methods in a study. It also provides a succinct explanation and basis for my view, expressed earlier, that I do not see that using quantitative methods as part of mixed methods investigation should classify this study as a positivist one. Instead, the study falls within a feminist research framework and utilises mixed methods. Along with some feminists, I am convinced of the utility of mixed methods. In addition to her interventions referred to above, Hesse-Biber (2010) has further contended that mixed methods research lends itself to the following feminist research goals: “(a) exploring women’s subjugated knowledge by giving voice to women’s experiences; (b) exploring the multiple understandings of the nature of social reality, as this particularly pertains to women’s issues and standpoints; (c) studying across differences in terms of race, class, gender, and so on; (d) fostering social justice and social change on behalf of women and other oppressed groups” (p. 75). She argues that whilst mixed methods research can help achieve the transformation goals of feminist research, so too can feminist perspectives contribute to the validity of mixed methods research. This is through the praxis of reflexivity, that is to say, “reflecting on our standpoint with specific reference to values, attitudes” (Hesse-Biber, 2010, p.186).



Creswell (2009) identifies six different strategies of mixed methods research. Undertaking the qualitative and quantitative research simultaneously is known as concurrent triangulation strategy (Creswell, 2009). Concurrent triangulation is the strategy employed in this research. Whilst I utilise secondary quantitative data, meaning that I did not collect the data and used an existing dataset, I compared the different data collected and sought to determine what the convergences and differences between the data were. This is a crucial aspect of the concurrent triangulation approach. As argued by Creswell (2009), the qualitative and quantitative approaches complement each other, and offset any weakness that may be attributed to the particular approach with the strength of the other approach and vice versa. In this study, the qualitative aspect provides the depth and richness to the data, whilst the quantitative aspect provides data pertaining to correlation, predictability of gender equality and happiness, and allows one to generalize the findings.

Chapter Ten demonstrates the mixed aspect of the approach, where the qualitative and quantitative results are discussed and interpreted together and conclusions are drawn.

5.4 The research aims

As indicated in Chapter One, the central question in this study is two-fold. First, I wish to find out whether gender equality policies and practices reportedly impact positively on (South African) women's lives, does it 'make women happy' (also referred to as subjective well-being or life satisfaction)? Second, I want to examine whether it is possible to have gender equality without happiness and vice versa.

To elaborate, the main question of the study is how women define gender equality and happiness (as unpacked in Chapters Two and Three) in their subjective lives, as well as how women who are positioned in different ways in society conceive of the relationship between gender equality and life satisfaction. The women I am interested in are "ordinary" women – meaning those who are not gender activists or gender researchers or academics focusing on gender – as well as those women who work on issues of gender and/or gender equality whether in academia, in non-governmental organisations or as activists.

The study departs from the assumption that gender equality and well-being are social goods in and of themselves. Furthermore, it is assumed that, everything being equal, gender equality makes women happy or could enhance women's well-being and that strives to liberate women from patriarchy, enhance or should enhance, women's life satisfaction.

As was discussed in Chapter Four, gender equality is not in evidence globally or locally. However, a wide range of measures have been put in place globally and locally to bring about gender equality and yet, one needs to ask, whether, in their experience, these measures impact positively on women's lives.

Within the larger research aim, the following are the objectives of the study:

- To explore a group of South African women's definitions and understandings of gender equality
- To explore a group of South African women's reported subjective experiences and perceptions of the effectiveness of gender equality measures in contemporary South Africa
- To explore how a group of South African women define happiness in their lives and in the lives of other women, and whether they believe that happiness is or should be linked to gender equality and in what ways
- To examine the intersection of race and class in women's constructions and experiences of gender equality and happiness.



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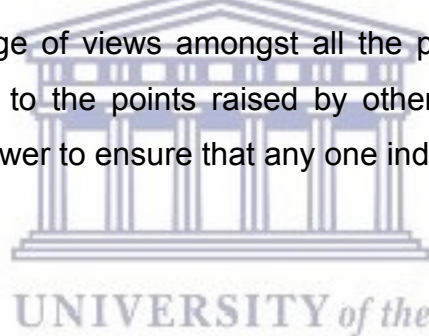
5.5 Qualitative research

5.5.1 Qualitative data collection

Qualitative research methods best suit the exploration of what gender equality and happiness *mean* to the women participants of this study. The study therefore employs both focus groups as well as individual, in-depth interviews. South Africa is still a very young democracy. It is thus assumed that women's experiences before 1994 and after would be very different. Given that women would (potentially) have different experiences of the oppressive policies or lack of policies pertaining to gender equality, I sought to interview women across differences of race, age and class. This provides richness to the data collected. Whilst the participants selected are not representative, and whilst

the aim was not to ensure a representative sample, I wanted to document the rich and diverse experiences of women across current realms of difference, although the experiences documented are by no means comprehensive.

Three focus groups were conducted with women. The interviews were all conducted in Cape Town. The number of focus groups was determined by the data obtained and the saturation of the data. The focus group method is an appropriate technique to use in this study as it allows me to take into consideration the personal, racial, gender, socio-politics and cultural contexts of the participants as well as the uniqueness of the interview (Fontana & Frey, 1994). The focus group brings together a small number of participants to discuss their understanding of gender equality and happiness. According to Walker (1985), the role of the interviewer is to facilitate the discussions by allowing for an exchange of views amongst all the participants, and for the participants to respond to the points raised by others. It was therefore my responsibility as interviewer to ensure that any one individual did not dominate the discussions.



The focus groups were conducted in June 2016 and in April 2017 and were comprised as follows:

Focus Group 1: Participants were sourced with the help of a principal at a school known to me. The first group comprised teachers at the school.

Focus Group 2: Participants were also sourced with the assistance from the same principal. The group comprised community²³ women who were assisting at the school in a support role.

²³ The term community (women) is used here and throughout the dissertation to refer to the women who participated in the focus groups and who were drawn from the school community.

Focus Group 3: The participants, who were an older group of women, were part of a women's group at a church, which I attend. I requested the assistance of one of the women in the women's group to assist with the recruitment of the participants. I was invited to a meeting of the group to conduct the interview.

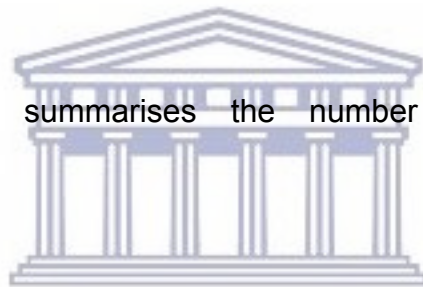
Eleven individual in-depth interviews were conducted with women who are regarded as 'experts' or key informants in the area of gender equality. They are drawn from academia, non-governmental organisations, Chapter Nine organisations and a teachers union. I requested interviews with participants via email and, where I did not personally know the participants, I was assisted by my networks who put in me contact with the participants. I primarily focused on women working on issues of gender (in)equality, as I deemed it might be easier for gender scholars and activists to reflect on life satisfaction rather than happiness scholars to reflect on gender equality. Participants were carefully selected for the in-depth individual interviews. The participants were selected purposefully as they were knowledgeable and informative about gender equality. Individual in-depth interviews have ensured that rich data was collected from these participants.

The focus group as well as individual in-depth interviews were conducted in English. In the focus group with the support staff at a school, I used Afrikaans, as I thought that some participants would feel more comfortable expressing themselves in Afrikaans. However, the participants indicated that this was not necessary. Semi-structured interview schedules were developed for both the focus groups and the individual interviews. This allowed the participants to freely express themselves whilst providing some structure to the interview. The focus groups, with between five to ten participants in each group, were approximately one and a half hours long. The individual interviews were an hour long.

Demographic information was obtained from the participants (both for the focus groups as well as the individual interviews) by means of the written form that was given to them to complete. The following information was requested:

- Sex/gender identification
- Age in years
- Racial identification: with the options black (african), coloured, indian/asian, white, other.
- Highest level of schooling
- Current status: with the options student, employed, unemployed
- Occupation
- Class identification: with the options working class, middle class, upper middle class

The following briefly summarises the number of participants and demographical details:



- In total, three focus groups were conducted. Approximately 22 women participated in the focus groups. They were mainly drawn from working class and middle class communities. Whilst most of the women had some form of tertiary qualifications, a number of participants who were support staff at the school and participants from the church group, had not completed high school (grade 12). Participants mostly identified as coloured, with a few identifying as black. Participants ranged in age from 27 to 77 years.
- Eleven individual interviews were conducted with key informants. Most of the participants identified as middle class. Participants were drawn from diverse racial backgrounds i.e. black, coloured and white. All of the participants had a post-graduate degree, with most reporting Ph.Ds as the highest educational level. The age range for participants was 38 to 54. The participants mostly identified as middle class.

See Appendix One for participants' details.

The individual in-depth interviews as well as the focus groups were structured around four categories of questions i.e. questions pertaining to the legislative changes that has taken place in the country since 1994, questions of gender equality, questions related to happiness, and questions related to the relationship between gender equality and happiness (see Appendix Two and Three). At the start of the focus groups and individual in-depth interviews, I introduced my research and the objectives of the research. After the introductions, I discussed the issue of confidentiality, voluntary participation and indicated that participants could withdraw at any stage of the process. Participants were given consent forms to complete. In the focus group interview with the group of church women, a number of women failed to complete the forms, as they were pressed for time and had to get the transport that they had arranged. I further requested permission to record the interviews. Permission for recording the interviews was received in all instances. All but one of the interviews was recorded due to a failure of the recording equipment. Immediately following the interview, I recorded, as best as I could remember, the participant's (Amy) perceptions on the topics discussed.

5.5.2 Qualitative data analysis

The qualitative data emanating from the focus groups as well as the individual interviews were transcribed verbatim, in order to facilitate the analysis of the data. I made use of a transcriber to transcribe most of the interviews and I transcribed the rest. I checked all the transcriptions for accuracy by listening to all recordings and checking them against the transcribed interviews.

In analysing the qualitative data it is critical to “stay close to the data, to interpret it from a position of empathetic understanding” (Terre Blanche & Kelly, 1999, p. 139). The purpose of the analysis was to provide a ‘thick description’ of the data or a comprehensive description of the data (see Terre Blanche & Kelly, 1999). For this reason, thematic analysis was used to analyse the qualitative data. Thematic analysis is a coherent way of organising or reading interview material in relation to the specific research questions (Banister, et al, 1994). It is also a method used to identify, analyse and report themes or patterns within the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

In order to manage and organise the data, I used ATLAS.ti version 8.1.3(522). ATLAS.ti is a software package that allows one to analyse huge amounts of qualitative data, whether it is in textual, visual or audio form. I started the analysis by reading and re-reading the transcripts. As I did not have predetermined themes, I used the research questions to frame the initial coding of the data. This has been termed inductive analysis, which is the process of coding the data without trying to arrange it into predetermined themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006).



Following the initial reading and re-reading of the interviews, I highlighted segments of text (quotations) and assigned a code to them. This code either emanated from the text itself (the words used by the participant) or was a descriptive code that I assigned. In total, 80 codes were developed. Following the coding of all interviews, I clustered the codes under particular themes. The clustering was guided by the similarities and difference amongst the codes. I further looked for relations amongst these themes or clusters, and often the codes would shift between themes, following further reading and re-reading of the transcripts (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The themes and codes were presented schematically. ATLAS.ti allows one to build networks based on the relations between the themes and to illustrate this diagrammatically. During the process of presenting the themes schematically, I continued to move back and forth between the themes, shifting codes within and across themes, in

order to clearly show the logic and rationale for the allocation of code to theme, and looking for particular patterns of meaning (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In this process, the research questions as well as literature served as a guide. The analysis does not present a full account of the themes, as I focused solely on those that answered the research questions. It is for this reason that the results are presented in three chapters focusing on the legislative reforms, gender equality and happiness as well as its links to gender equality.

5.6 Quantitative research

Quantitative research was used to investigate whether there is a *correlation* between gender equality and happiness and whether views on gender equality are predictors of subjective well-being. Quantitative research methods are best suited to answer questions of relationships between variables and to draw conclusions about cause and effect (O'Dwyer & Bernauer, 2014). Quantitative techniques allow one to gather data from a large number of participants, without necessarily getting in-depth information on the areas under investigation. As part of the mixed methods approach, the quantitative research aspect has allowed me to explore the diverse understandings of the nature of social reality from the perspective of women, as well as to study the social reality across differences including race, class and educational levels, amongst others (Hesse-Biber, 2010).

I used the data from an existing global research project, the South African World Values Survey, Wave 6²⁴, in this study (Ingelhart, et al. (eds.), 2014). The South African World Values Survey forms part of the global World Values Survey, which is carried out in nearly 100 countries (World Values Survey, n.d.). The World Values Survey is a representative survey, and measures people's opinions, values and beliefs in relation to a number of topics including gender equality, subjective well-being, economic development,

²⁴ This was the latest data available at the time of my study. The data was collected in 2013.

religion, democracy, work, family, security, amongst others. The World Values Survey has been conducted since 1981 and thus allows researchers, governments, political scientists, social scientists, etc., to assess how people's values, beliefs, opinions have changed over time. Given the survey's focus on topics that included both gender equality and subjective well-being (including affect and life satisfaction), the data collected was strategically aligned to the objectives of my study. Furthermore, given that the sample was representative of the population, it was convenient to use this data set, as undertaking a survey on this scale would not have been economically viable for me.

5.6.1 Research design

The research design of this study can best be described as a cross-sectional correlational design. Correlational designs are observational, meaning that as researcher, you do not intervene or manipulate the participants (subjects) in any way, and observe what naturally occurs in participants' settings (Field, 2013; Graziano & Raulin, 2013). Through this method, measurements are taken of the participants and the relationships are determined amongst the measures or variables (Salkind, 2000). The specific correlational design employed was a cross-sectional design. In cross-sectional designs, all measurements are taken at one given point (Graziano & Raulin, 2013), and imply that the data will be collected from participants across different ages and with different people representing these different age groups (Field, 2013). This design was most appropriate as it provides a natural view of the research being undertaken. The measures of the variables are furthermore robust and should not have been influenced by the fieldworkers collecting the data. One of the challenges of cross-sectional designs, as stated by Pretorius, et.al. (n.d.) is that "the single point of measurement might not support the determination of causal relationships between variables since there often is no direct evidence that one set of variations in one variable preceded and thereby produced or cause the second" (p. 16).

5.6.2 Sampling methods and sample

The South African World Values Survey is a representative survey, which uses the common World Values Survey questionnaire. The sample used was a stratified area sample of adults, over the age of 16 years, living in residential homes (Ipsos, 2013). Stratified sampling is best used when the population is heterogeneous and contains different layers or different groups (strata) within the area of study (Leedy, 1997; Salkind, 2000). Stratified sampling guarantees that a large number of representatives of the different groups are included in the sample (Salkind, 2000). This sampling method was multi-staged (World Values Survey, 2013). The first stage included the stratification of the sample, selection of the primary sampling unit, the enumerator areas, which were based on the South African Census of 2011 (World Values Survey, 2013). The second stage sampling included the selection of the households and the third stage involved the selection of the respondents, 16 years and older (World Values Survey, 2013). The sample size was 3 531 with an estimated sampling error of 1.7 (World Values Survey, 2013). Furthermore, the sample was weighted for the population of South Africa, 16 years of age and older (Ipsos, 2013). The Rim weighting method was used to weight the data to the South African population sixteen years and older living in metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas (Ipsos, 2013). The data was weighted using amongst other gender, language, age, race, metro, province and community size (World Values Survey, 2013).

As I was only interested in South African women's experiences of gender equality and happiness, only the cases for women, who were born in South Africa, were considered. There were 1 486 cases altogether, which was weighted for the population 16 years and older (excluding cases with missing data, as discussed in section 5.6.4 below). The demographics of this sample are presented below in Table 6.

Table 6: Demographics²⁵

		n	%	
Race	Black	1153	77.6	
	White	197	13.3	
	Coloured	98	6.6	
	Indian	36	2.4	
	Other	2	.1	
Language	Afrikaans	198	13.3	
	English	170	11.5	
	Ndebele	13	.9	
	Northern Sotho	156	10.5	
	Sesotho	144	9.7	
	Swazi	31	2.1	
	Tsonga	54	3.6	
	Tswana	140	9.4	
	Venda	28	1.9	
	Xhosa	213	14.3	
	Zulu	340	22.9	
	Class	Upper class	15	1.0
		Upper middle class	170	11.5

²⁵ As noted elsewhere, weighted data was used. SPSS calculates the frequencies for the weighted data using decimals. In the final frequency table, SPSS rounds off the number. Hence, the manual calculation of the frequency using the rounded off n might not equal 1486.

	Lower middle class	268	18.0
	Working class	344	23.2
	Lower class	688	46.3
Employment	Full time	340	22.9
	Part time	81	5.4
	Self employed	34	2.3
	Retired	143	9.6
	Housewife	209	14.1
	Students	120	8.1
	Unemployed	559	37.6
Marital Status	Married	507	34.1
	Living together as married	149	10.0
	Divorced	26	1.7
	Separated	14	.9
	Widowed	133	8.9
	Single	658	44.3
Number of children	None	348	23.4
	1 child	359	24.2
	2 children	410	27.6
	3 children	235	15.8
	4 children	76	5.1

	5 children	29	1.9
	6 children	12	.8
	7 children	8	.6
	8 or more children	9	.6
Highest educational level	No formal education	32	2.1
	Primary school (including incomplete and complete)	162	10.9
	Incomplete secondary school	482	32.4
	Complete secondary school	675	45.5
	Some university level education – without degree	73	4.9
	University - with degree	62	4.2
Age²⁶	Range	Mean	SD
	16 – 85 years	38.17	14.855

²⁶ All age groups of women were included in the sample. In other words, women were not excluded on the basis of age. The women were a representative sample across ages as the sample was weighted.

5.6.3 Data collection

5.6.3.1 Data collection instrument

As indicated, the World Values Survey questionnaire was used. The questionnaire includes on a number of topics, which Ipsos (2013) has classified under core values (this includes questions around purpose in life and life satisfaction, which is significant for my study), social values, trust and tolerance, gender matters, work issues, environmental matters, political values, economic values, religion and moral values, matters related to the media and issues related to security. The specific items relevant to this study are discussed below:

Table 7: Items and responses

Variable number	Item	Response categories
v10	Taking all things together, would you say you are	1 = Very happy 2 = Rather happy 3 = Not very happy 4 = Not at all happy
v23	All things considered, how satisfied as you with your life as a whole these days? ²⁷	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 From 1 Completely dissatisfied to 10 Completely satisfied

²⁷ The World Values Survey has asked the same life satisfaction question from 1981, which makes it possible to look at the consistency over time. Reporting on the reliability of the scale, Diener et al (2013) notes that there was a ".78 correlation between earliest and latest measure across a mean time span of 16.5 years (N=72 nations)" (p. 499).

v45	When jobs are scarce, men should have more right to a job than a woman ²⁸ .	1 = Agree 2 = Neither 3 = Disagree
v47	If a woman earns more money than her husband, it's almost certain to cause problems ²⁹ .	1 = Agree 2 = Neither 3 = Disagree
v48	Having a job is the best way for a woman to be an independent person ³⁰ .	1 = Agree 2 = Neither 3 = Disagree
v50	When a mother works for pay, the children suffer.	1 = Strongly agree 2 = Agree 3 = Disagree 4 = Strongly disagree
v51	On the whole, men make better political leaders than women do.	1 = Strongly agree 2 = Agree 3 = Disagree 4 = Strongly disagree
v52	A university education is more important for a boy than for a girl.	1 = Strongly agree 2 = Agree 3 = Disagree 4 = Strongly disagree


²⁸ Hereafter variable is called 'jobs scarce'.

²⁹ Hereafter variable is called 'women earning more'.

³⁰ Hereafter variable is called 'independence'.

v53	On the whole, men make better business executives than women do.	1 = Strongly agree 2 = Agree 3 = Disagree 4 = Strongly disagree
v54	Being a housewife is just as fulfilling as working for pay.	1 = Strongly agree 2 = Agree 3 = Disagree 4 = Strongly disagree
v55	Some people feel they have completely free choice and control over their lives, while other people feel that what they do has no real effect on what happens to them. Please use this scale where 1 means “no choice at all” and 10 means “a great deal of choice” to indicate how much freedom of choice and control you feel you have over the way your life turns out.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 With 1 being no choice and 10 being a great deal of choice
v57	Are you currently...	1 = Married 2 = Living together as married 3 = Divorced 4 = Separated 5 = Widowed 6 = Single

v58	Have you had any children?	0 = No children 1 = One child 2 = Two children 3 = Three children 4 = Four children 5 = Five children 6 = Six children 7 = Seven children 8 = Eight or more children
v79	Tradition is important to this person; to follow the customs handed down by one's religion and family.	1 = Very much like me 2 = Like me 3 = Somewhat like me 4 = A little like me 5 = Not like me 6 = Not at all like me
v80	Please indicate which of the following problems you consider the most serious one for the world as a whole?	1 = People living in poverty and need 2 = Discrimination against girls and women 3 = Poor sanitation and infectious diseases 4 = Inadequate sanitation 5 = Environmental

		pollution	
v139	<p>Many things are desirable, but not all of them are essential characteristics of democracy. Please tell how essential you think it is as a characteristic of democracy:</p> <p>Women have the same rights as men³¹.</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</p> <p>Where 1 is not an essential characteristic of democracy and 10 is an essential characteristic of democracy.</p>	
<p>Please tell me for each of the following actions whether you think it can always be justified, never be justified, or something in between, using this card</p>		<p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</p> <p>With 1 being never justifiable to 10 which is always justifiable</p>	
v203	Homosexuality		
v203A	Prostitution		
v204	Abortion		
v205	Divorce		
v206	Sex before marriage		
v208	For a man to beat his wife		
v209	Parents beating their children		
v210	Violence against other people		
v229	<p>Are you employed now or not? If yes, about how many hours a week? If more than one job: only for the main job.</p>		<p>Yes, has paid employment:</p> <p>1 = Full time employee (30 hours a week or more)</p> <p>2 = Part time employee</p>

³¹ Hereafter the variable is called 'same rights'.

		<p>(less than 30 hours a week)</p> <p>3 = Self employed</p> <p>No, no paid employment:</p> <p>4 = Retired/pensioned</p> <p>5 = Housewife not otherwise employed</p> <p>6 = Student</p> <p>7 = Unemployed</p> <p>8 = Other (write in)</p>
v235	Are you the chief wage earner in your household?	<p>1 = Yes</p> <p>2 = No</p>
v236	Is the chief wage earner of your household employed now or not?	<p>1 = Yes</p> <p>2 = No</p>
v238	People sometimes describe themselves as belonging to the working class, middle class, or the upper or lower class. Would you describe yourself as belonging to the...	<p>1 = Upper class</p> <p>2 = Upper middle class</p> <p>3 = Lower middle class</p> <p>4 = Working class</p> <p>5 = Lower class</p>
v240	Sex (by observation)	<p>1 = Male</p> <p>2 = Female</p>
v242	This means you are XX years old	The number is indicated
v247	Which language do you normally	8 = Afrikaans

	speak at home?	<p>128 = English</p> <p>320 = Ndebele</p> <p>333 = Northern Sotho</p> <p>422 = Sesotho</p> <p>434 = Swazi</p> <p>462 = Tsonga</p> <p>463 = Tswana</p> <p>481 = Venda</p> <p>493 = Xhosa</p> <p>505 = Zulu</p>
v248	What is the highest educational level that you have attained?	<p>1 = No formal education</p> <p>2 = Incomplete primary school</p> <p>3 = Complete primary school</p> <p>4 = Incomplete secondary school: technical/vocational type</p> <p>5 = Complete secondary school: technical/vocational type</p> <p>6 = Incomplete secondary: university-preparatory type</p> <p>7 = Complete secondary: university-preparatory type</p>

		8 = Some university-level education, without degree 9 = University-level education, with degree
v254	Ethnic group (Observations by interviewer)	1 = Black 2 = White 3 = Coloured 4 = Indian 5 = Other
v258	Weight variable	

A number of variables (v) relate to gender equality in the questionnaire. Of interest to me are the variables 45³², 47³³ and 48³⁴, which touch on values related to gender equality. Based on the responses, a composite score for gender equality values related to jobs were developed. The new variable, calculating the total for gender equality in relation to jobs, was created. This variable was called GE JOBTOT (the reliability and factor analysis of this scale are discussed in section 5.6.3.1.1.). A low score on this variable indicated more conservative or negative views on gender equality, and a high score more progressive or positive views on gender equality. In order to do this, variable 48 required reverse scoring since it was phrased in the opposite direction to the other items.

A second set of questions further related to views on gender equality, but looked at perceptions and values attached to women working and the impact on their children, men and women as political and business leaders, and the

³² When jobs are scarce, men should have more right to a job than a woman.

³³ If a woman earns more money than her husband, it's almost certain to cause problems.

³⁴ Having a job is the best way for a woman to be an independent person.

importance of higher education for boys and girls. This variable measured different aspects of values related to gender equality as compared to the one relating to jobs. This variable was called GE DIVTOT. Given that these questions measured different aspect of gender equality, and as they had different response categories, a separate new variable calculating the total for gender equality in relation to a number of diverse statements was calculated. The second composite score's set of questions included variables 50³⁵, 51³⁶, 52³⁷, 53³⁸ and 54³⁹. A low score on this variable indicated more conservative or negative views on gender equality, and a high score more progressive or positive views on gender equality. The reliability and factor analysis of this scale are discussed in section 5.6.3.1.1. These composite scores were computed in order to test whether the composite gender equality variables (GE JOBTOT and GE DIVTOT) were correlated and predictors of happiness and life satisfaction.

In addition, a new categorical variable was developed based on variable 23⁴⁰, satisfaction with your life (life satisfaction), which was a continuous variable. Four categories were developed namely 1-completely dissatisfied⁴¹, 2-somewhat dissatisfied⁴², 3-somewhat satisfied⁴³, 4-completely satisfied⁴⁴. A study by Rothmann and Veenhoven (n.d.) reporting on happiness in South Africa provides support for the reconfiguration of the variable.

Three further demographical variables were transformed. The first being age (v242), which was transformed from a continuous to a categorical variable.

³⁵ When a mother works for pay, the children suffer.

³⁶ On the whole, men make better political leaders than women do.

³⁷ A university education is more important for a boy than for a girl.

³⁸ On the whole, men make better business executives than women do.

³⁹ Being a housewife is just as fulfilling as working for pay.

⁴⁰ The question related to variable 23 was: All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days? This was a continuous variable with the scale 1 to 10 with 1 completely dissatisfied and 10 being completely satisfied.

⁴¹ Includes a rating of 1, 2 and 3.

⁴² Includes a rating of 4 and 5.

⁴³ Includes a rating of 6 and 7.

⁴⁴ Includes a rating of 8, 9 and 10.

Transforming the variable into a categorical variable allowed for frequency distribution to be clustered and not dispersed as it was across the years. The frequencies in some of the age groups were also very small, and transforming the variables thus corrects distributional problems (Field, 2013). These transformed response categories were based on the age categories used for analysis in the World Values Survey Results for South Africa. The second variable that was transformed, given the number of response categories, was highest educational level attained. This was transformed from a 9-category response to a 6-category response item. The variable was transformed, as the minute level of detail (i.e. whether you had a completed high schooling by type of secondary schooling) was not necessary in the analysis. Rather, it was key to see whether the respondents had complete or incomplete secondary schooling, as well as some primary school education, so as to differentiate them from respondents who had no formal education. The table below reflects the variables that were transformed. The third variable transformed relates to variable 80. As I was interested in the items related to gender, the variable was transformed into a categorical variable with two responses i.e. gender is a priority and gender is not a priority.

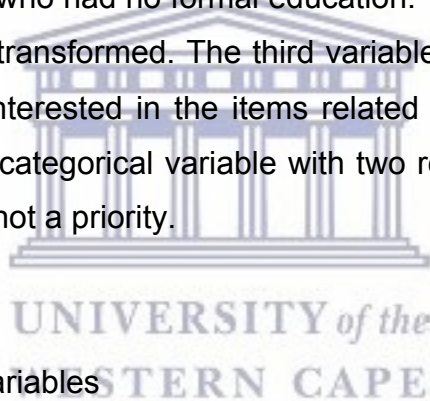


Table 8: Transformed variables

Variable	Transformed variable name	Item	Response categories
V23	SATCAT23A	All things considered, how satisfied as you with your life as a whole these days?	1 = Completely dissatisfied 2 = Somewhat dissatisfied 3 = Somewhat satisfied 4 = Completely

			satisfied.
V80		Please indicate which of the following problems you consider the most serious one for the world as a whole? ⁴⁵	1 = Gender discrimination is a priority 2 = Gender discrimination is not a priority
v242	AGECAT	This means you are XX years old.	16 – 29 years 30 – 49 years 50 years and above
v248	EDUCATRANS	What is the highest educational level that you have attained?	1 = No formal education 2 = Primary school ⁴⁶ 3 = Incomplete secondary school ⁴⁷ 4 = Complete secondary school ⁴⁸ 5 = Some

⁴⁵ Hereafter the variable is called 'discrimination priority'.

⁴⁶ Combined response categories incomplete and complete primary school (responses 2 and 3).

⁴⁷ Combined response categories incomplete secondary school technical/vocational as well as university-preparatory type (responses 4 and 6).

⁴⁸ Combined response categories complete secondary school technical/vocational as well as university-preparatory type (responses 5 and 7).

			university level education (without degree) 6 = University level education (with degree)
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5.6.3.1.1 Factor analysis and reliability of scales

As indicated above, two scales of gender equality were constructed, namely a composite score for gender equality items related to jobs (GE JOBTOT) and a composite score for diverse gender equality items (GE DIVTOT). Factor analysis and reliability statistics were run amongst the items for each scale to assess whether these variables measure a single variable i.e. GE JOBTOT and GEDIVTOT. Table 9 below presents the results for the factor analysis on the GE JOBTOT scale of items with the reliability statistics.

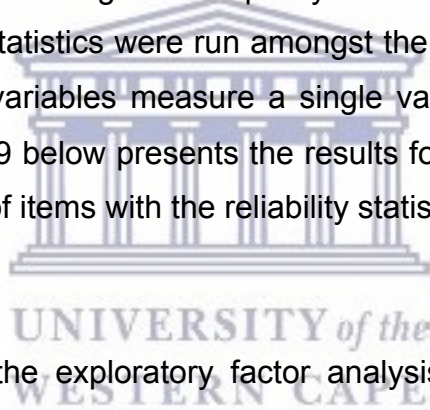


Table 9: Summary of the exploratory factor analysis for the GE JOBTOT variable (N = 1486)

Item	Factor Loadings	Eigenvalues	% of variance
When jobs are scarce, men should have more right to a job than a woman	.684	1.58	52.62
If a woman earns more money than her husband, it's almost certain to cause problems	.836	.88	29.352
Having a job is the best way for a woman to be an independent	-.643	.54	18.031

person⁴⁹

α .54

A principal component analysis (PCA) was conducted on the three items. No further rotation was done, as only one of the eigenvalues was greater than 1. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measures the sampling adequacy, and with a KMO = .54 indicates mediocre sample. This possibly suggests that some of the variables should not be included in this scale. As can be seen from the table above, all but one of the loadings was good, with jobs are scarce and women earning more money items indicating that they represent the GE JOBTOT factor. The loading on the last item indicates a negative loading. As I had used the transformed item, it was not expected that this item would load in the opposite direction. The GE JOBTOT had a low reliability, Cronbach's $\alpha = .54$. This is possibly due to the construct only having three items and as the response options include a 'neither'⁵⁰ option, which could have affected the item since it is unclear how the neither option was interpreted by participants. Given the results of the factor analysis as well as the reliability statistics, this variable GE JOBTOT was excluded from the regression analysis. However, the three separate items were included in the regression analysis. Table 10 below presents the results for the factor analysis on the GE JOBTOT scale of items with the reliability statistics.

Table 10: Summary of the exploratory factor analysis for the GE DIVTOT variable (N = 1486)

Item	Factor Loadings	Eigenvalues	% of variance
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⁴⁹ Transformed variable was used.

⁵⁰ On the item 'jobs are scarce, the frequency for the neither option was 20.9%, the frequency for the neither option on 'women earning more was 36.5% and the frequency for the neither option on 'independence' was 27.4%

When a mother works for pay, the children suffer	.688	2.945	58.91
On the whole, men make better political leaders than women do	.755	.676	13.52
A university education is more important for a boy than for a girl	.818	.537	10.75
On the whole, men make better business executives than women do	.834	.486	9.72
Being a housewife is just as fulfilling as working for pay	.733	.355	7.10
α	.82		

A principal component analysis (PCA) was conducted on the five items. No further rotation was done as only one of the eigenvalues was greater than 1. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measures the sampling adequacy, and with a KMO = .84 verifies the sampling adequacy for the analysis. An analysis was run to obtain the eigenvalues of the components, of which only one component had an eigenvalue over 1 and in combination explained 58.91% of the variance. As can be seen from the table above, all the loadings were good, indicating that they represent the GE DIVTOT factor. The GE DIVTOT had a high reliability, Cronbach's $\alpha = .82$. Based on the factor analysis and the reliability statistics, the GE DIVTOT variable was included in the regression analysis.

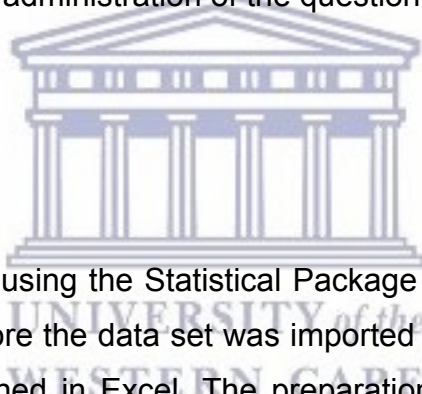
5.6.3.2 Data collection procedures

The data was collected using the Face 2 Face CAPI (Computer Assisted Personal Interview) method (Ipsos, 2013.). In this method, the interviewer went to the area and household directly and did a face-to-face interview, using

a portable computer to directly capture respondents' responses to the questions. The questionnaire was available in English, Zulu, Xhosa, Sotho, Tswana and Afrikaans, and the respondent could request that the interview be done in any of these six languages (Ipsos, 2013). Ipsos report that the interviews were approximately 82 minutes and 42 seconds long (Ipsos, 2013). The length of the interview was one of the disadvantages reported by the fieldworkers.

Ipsos (2013) report that 192 interviewers and 20 supervisors were assigned to data collection. The minimum requirement for fieldworkers was a matric certificate and fieldwork experience, ability to use a cellphone and the CAPI notebook (Ipsos, 2013). All the interviewers received training from Ipsos on sampling, as well as the administration of the questionnaire.

5.6.4 Data analyses



The data was analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25. Before the data set was imported into SPSS, the data set was prepared and cleaned in Excel. The preparation and cleaning entailed extracting only the cases that was of relevance to this study, namely the sample of women who were born in South Africa. In addition, new variables (as discussed above) were created prior to the data being imported in SPSS. Furthermore, a number of missing values were identified across the cases. The missing cases were treated with the complete cases analysis approach (listwise deletion). This approach allows the deletion of missing values if the sample is big (Graham, J., 2009). The cases with missing values were thus deleted from the initial sample (approximately 300 weighted cases). The resulting sample size was thus 1 486 (weighted). As inferential statistics were run on the data, it was best to delete these cases in order that inaccurate inferences are not drawn about the data.

With regards to the statistical analysis, firstly, descriptive statistics, including frequencies and cross tabulations, were run on demographical information, as well as other relevant variables for this study. Secondly, correlations and chi-square were run to test the associations between the individual gender equality variables, as well as the composite variable GE DIVTOT and life satisfaction (v23) and feeling of happiness (happy, v10) variables. The correlational and chi-square analyses allow one to determine the relationship between variables and to indicate what the nature of the relationship is, meaning whether the variables are closely or remotely related (Leedy, 1997). The analyses thus give an indication of the strength of the relationship between the variables (Leedy, 1997).

Following the results of the correlation and chi-square, regressions were run to test the following null hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1:

H₀ = Agency, class, GE DIVTOT and race⁵¹ are not significant predictors of life satisfaction.

H₁ = Agency, class, GE DIVTOT and race are significant predictors of life satisfaction.

In relation to the above hypothesis, multiple regression was run with the dependent (outcome) variable life satisfaction (v23) using a hierarchical method. The first predictor variable entered was agency, given that it had a strong correlation with life satisfaction. Next entered into the model was class (lower class used as a reference group). The gender equality related variable GE DIVTOT, was entered next. Race was entered fourth into the model (black

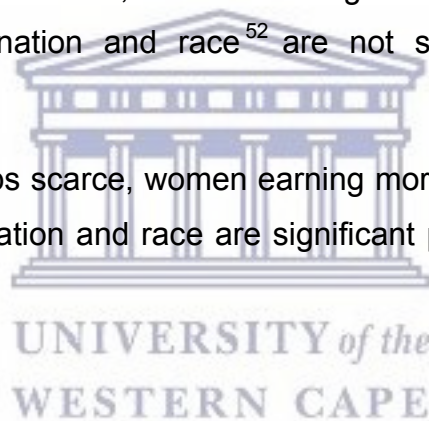
⁵¹ The "Other" category was excluded from race for the regression as there were only two weighted cases in this category. There was thus insufficient data to run the regression.

was used as a reference group). The method of entry of the variables was forced. Reference groups serve as the baseline or the (control) group against which all other groups are compared. This technique is normally used in multiple regression where categorical variables (with more than two response categories) are used as the predictor variables (Field, 2013). I determined the control groups based on the responses with the highest frequencies. Multiple regression was used to test this hypothesis, as more than one independent variable was used to predict the values of the outcome variable (Field, 2013; O'Dwyer & Bernauer, 2014).

Hypothesis 2:

H₀ = Agency, class, jobs scarce, women earning more, independence, same rights, gender discrimination and race⁵² are not significant predictors of feelings of happiness.

H₁ = Agency, class, jobs scarce, women earning more, independence, same rights, gender discrimination and race are significant predictors of feelings of happiness.



A multinomial logistic regression was run on this hypothesis, with the variable happy (v10) as the outcome variable. The predictor variables in order of entry into the model were gender discrimination, class, race, jobs scarce, women earning more, independence, agency and same rights. Multinomial logistic regression was used, as the outcome variable (happy) is a categorical variable with more than two categories, and the predictor variables are continuous and or categorical (Field, 2013).

The results of the above statistics are discussed in Chapter Six.

⁵² The "Other" category was excluded from race for the regression as there was insufficient data to run the regression.

5.7 Ethical considerations

The Senate Research Committee of the University of the Western Cape provided ethical approval for the research project. The principles of transparency, respect for the participants, informed consent and voluntary participation of participants, as well as the confidentiality and anonymity of participants guided my research project.

In keeping with the principle of transparency, at the outset of each focus group and individual in-depth interview, I would explain my research project and the objectives thereof. Participants then had the opportunity to ask questions of clarification before the interview commenced. Participants were also presented with an information sheet, indicating the purpose of the study and how the information would be used (see Appendix Four).

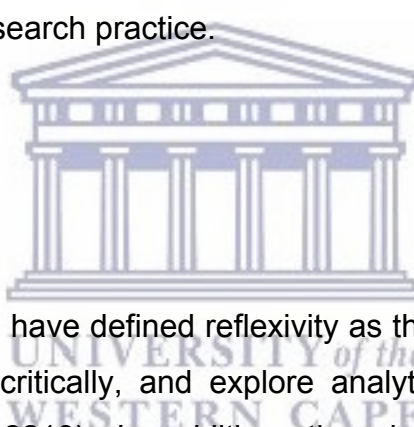
Participation in the research process was completely voluntary, and participants were informed of this and that they could withdraw from the research process at any stage. They were then presented with a consent form, which was completed prior to the interview taking place (see Appendix Five). As noted earlier in this chapter, approximately five participants in the focus group with the church women did not complete the forms, as they had to immediately leave the group at the end of the interview.

At the onset of the interviews, I also indicated that the information shared would be confidential and that it would be used for the purposes of my research. All responses would be anonymised and that responses would not be linked to the actual names of the participants. It was for this reason that pseudonyms were used in presenting the results. In one of the individual in-depth interviews, a respondent indicated that I may use her name. However, I

did not take up this offer and preferred to keep all participants' identities anonymous.

Ipsos, the organisation which collected the quantitative data for the World Values Survey, reports that fieldworkers received intensive training on interviewing protocols. Once participants were selected for the interviews, fieldworkers informed them that participation was voluntary and consent was obtained prior to the interviews. Ipsos (2013) reports that they had taken the necessary measures to ensure the security of the data collected and to prevent accidental loss, destruction and disclosure of the information. They are further bound to standards as set out by the South African Marketing Research Association (SAMRA) and ESOMAR International Code of Marketing and Social research practice.

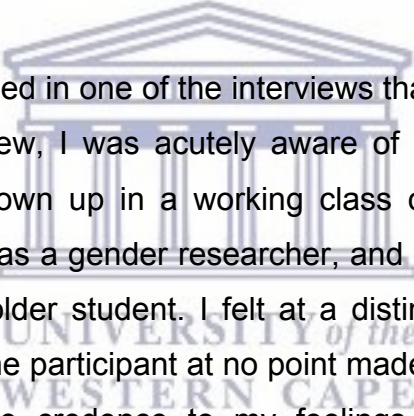
5.8 Self-reflexivity

The logo of the University of the Western Cape, featuring a classical building with columns and a pediment, with the text 'UNIVERSITY of the WESTERN CAPE' overlaid.

Fonow and Cook (2005) have defined reflexivity as the “tendency of feminists to reflect on, examine critically, and explore analytically the nature of the research process” (p. 2218). In addition, they have acknowledged that reflexivity also “mean the way researchers consciously write themselves into the text, the audiences’ reactions to and reflections on the meaning of the research, the social location of the researcher, and the analysis of disciplines as sites of knowledge production” (Fonow & Cook, 2005, p. 2219).

As a feminist researcher, I am aware that research is never neutral. As researcher, I am influenced by and influence the research process. My locatedness as a feminist, black, educated, researcher with working class roots, but now from a middle class background, had me acutely aware of my positioning throughout the research process, but especially in particular interviews.

I turn to reflect specifically on my positioning as an educated woman from a middle class background, English speaking, in the focus group with the community women. A number of participants were reticent in the interview and I continuously tried to engage them in the conversation by directly soliciting what they thought about gender equality and happiness. In my attempts to do so, I interspersed English and Afrikaans in the reflections that I made as well as the questions that I asked. This was an attempt to make the participants feel more comfortable and facilitate their participation in the conversations. In this focus group, I was concerned that it was my positioning and the perceived 'power' that I have in the interviews, that made some of the participants reticent.



This scenario was reversed in one of the interviews that I had with a white key informant. In this interview, I was acutely aware of my location as a black researcher, who had grown up in a working class community, with not as many years' experience as a gender researcher, and keenly aware that I was doing my Ph.D. as an older student. I felt at a distinct disadvantage in the interview, even though the participant at no point made me feel uncomfortable or said anything to give credence to my feelings. It was, however, her positioning as a white woman, with years of experience and knowledge of gender, that made me feel unsettled in the interview.

In reflecting on the research process and the interviews, particularly those with the key informants, given the one on one nature of the interviews, I wondered how they perceived the question on whether they were happy? This question differed from the other questions posed in the interviews, and required them to reflect far more on a personal and intimate level as opposed to what they thought gender equality and happiness means for women generally, given their positioning as key informants. Asking this question in the focus groups felt different, as participants had been reflecting throughout on

these questions from a personal perspective. Participants reflected honestly on this question, and I felt privileged that they would share their experiences so generously. I thus felt a huge sense of responsibility to treat their responses, both in the interviews as well as in the analysis of the data, with the necessary sensitivity and care.

5.9 Conclusion

In summation, this chapter outlines the methodological framework which guided this research study. As discussed, this study is located within a feminist framework and is concerned with women's meaning-making, experiences and perceptions of gender equality and happiness. Mixed methods guide this research, and both qualitative and quantitative research were employed, utilising a concurrent triangulation strategy.

This chapter has outlined the qualitative procedures for the selection of the participants, the methods of data collection as well as the processes followed in the thematic analysis of the data.

As discussed in section 5.6, I utilised the data set of the World Values Survey in the quantitative research component of the research. The research design was descriptive, correlational and cross-sectional design. The quantitative aspect of the research was predominantly concerned with whether there is a correlation between gender equality and happiness and whether various gender equality indicators are predictors of happiness of happiness. In testing this, four hypotheses were posed and tested.

The ethical considerations guiding this study were outlined in this chapter. In addition, in keeping with feminist research principles, I firmly located my

position as a black woman, with working class roots but who currently is in a position of privilege, as a middle class, educated, woman and have reflected on how my positioning potentially influenced my study.

In the next four chapters, I present the findings of the quantitative component of the study (Chapter Six) as well as the qualitative findings of the study (Chapters Seven, Eight and Nine).



Chapter Six: Associations between gender equality and happiness variables

6.1 Introduction

The central questions of this study are do gender equality policies and practices impact positively on women's lives, and does gender equality make women happy? In this chapter, I present a series of quantitatively generated associations between gender equality and happiness variables, where happiness is defined both as affect (positive and negative, what I call happiness-as-affect) as well as life satisfaction (referred to as happiness-as-life-satisfaction). I first look at whether the women in the study are happy (reporting on both affective states and satisfaction with their lives) and who, amongst South African women, across different demographics, are happy. As indicated in Chapter Five, in the qualitative study the women who participated in the individual interviews were key informants, while the women who participated in the focus groups were women who were not involved in the gender sector, but were drawn from a church group as well as teachers and support staff at a school. The women in the quantitative study were a representative sample of women, across different demographics, in South Africa. I further look at whether there is a correlation between the values that participants attach to gender equality and happiness. I next turn to the question of what value the participants in the study place on gender equality. The value that women ascribe to gender equality is important, given the government's focus on gender equality and the work undertaken by numerous scholars, non-governmental organisations and activists in the gender sector.

The chapter is structured as follows. I will firstly present and interpret the findings⁵³ of the descriptive statistics, looking at whether women are happy or not, and secondly what value they put on gender equality. Thirdly, I will

⁵³ As indicated in Chapter Five, the World Values data set for South Africa was used (Inglehart, Haerpfer, Moreno, Welzel, Kizilova, Diez-Medrano, ... & Puranen, et al. (Eds.), 2014).

present the findings of the inferential statistics looking at the correlation between happiness as affect and gender equality, as well as happiness as life satisfaction and gender equality. In addition, I consider what are some of the predictors of happiness-as-affect and happiness-life-satisfaction. I conclude the chapter with a discussion of the key findings.

6.2 The face of happiness-as-affect, happiness-as-life-satisfaction and gender equality

6.2.1 Happiness-as-affect

The main question for this study is whether women are happy or not. This section looks at how women report on their affect (positive and negative), by considering their age, class, marital, educational status and diverse race groups. Table 11. looks specifically at the question of whether women are happy or not and reports on the frequencies on this variable.

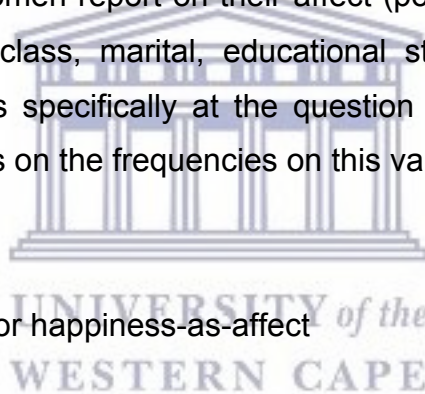



Table 11: Frequencies for happiness-as-affect

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very happy	559	37.7	37.7
	Rather happy	575	38.7	76.4
	Not very happy	269	18.1	94.5
	Not at all happy	82	5.5	100.0
	Total	1486	100.0	

The majority of women are happy. Three in four of the participants (76.4%) reported that they are happy. Only a small number of participants indicated that they are not very happy or not at all happy. This finding implies that the majority of women exhibit positive affect as opposed to negative affect. The mean score for affect is 1.91 (SD = .88) (where 1 = very happy and 4 = not at all happy), which indicates that the sample of women was happy.

I was also interested in the differences amongst women from diverse racial backgrounds. Table 12 presents the mean scores for women across diverse racial groups and their feelings of happiness. The closer the mean is to 1, the happier the group.

Table 12: Race and happiness-as-affect



Race ⁵⁴		N	%	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Black	Happiness	1153	77.59	1	4	1.96	.879
White	Happiness	197	13.25	1	4	1.58	.744
Coloured	Happiness	98	6.59	1	4	2.00	.980
Indian	Happiness	36	2.42	1	4	2.08	.874
Other	Happiness	2	.13	2	2	2.00	.000


Women across diverse race groups reported that they were happy, with scores falling between very happy and rather happy. When levels of happiness are compared across race groups, however, white women, with a mean score of 1.58, are relatively more the happy than black, coloured and

⁵⁴ As indicated in Chapter One, I continue to use apartheid categories since they are used for redress and are also of salience in identity construction in South Africa today.

indian women. A mean score of 1.58 indicates that white women reported that they were happy, with the score falling between very happy and rather happy. indian and coloured women are the least happy across different raced backgrounds, with a mean score of 2.00 and 2.08 respectively, indicating that they fall between rather happy and not very happy.

Age has often been cited as a factor in happiness (Frey & Stutzer, 2002a). I looked at women of different ages reported on the levels of happiness. These findings are presented in Table 13.

Table 13: Age and happiness-as-affect



Age		N	%	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
16-29	Happiness	528	35.53	1	4	1.82	.827
30-49	Happiness	611	41.11	1	4	1.93	.909
50-85	Happiness	347	23.35	1	4	2.04	.883

Younger women between the ages 16–29 years are slightly happier than women in other age categories. Women in the 30–49 age group were however slightly less happy than the average score for women. We observe that women aged 50–85 years are the least happy amongst the age groups. Notwithstanding that this group of women are the least happy amongst the age groups, they still reported that they are rather happy.

Happiness studies, especially economic studies, have conventionally focussed on individuals income (and thus class) as a predictor of happiness

(Easterlin, 2003; Frey & Stutzer, 2002a). In the next table, the social class of participants is presented against their levels of happiness.

Table 14: Social class and happiness-as-affect

Class		N	%	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Upper	Happiness	15	1.00	1	3	1.34	.673
Upper middle	Happiness	170	11.44	1	4	1.43	.628
Lower middle	Happiness	268	18.03	1	4	1.79	.781
Working	Happiness	344	23.14	1	4	1.75	.794
Lower	Happiness	688	46.29	1	4	2.18	.925

Those participants who had identified as lower class reported as the least happy of the groups. The lower class group reported a higher mean score of 2.18, when compared with the overall mean score of 1.91 for the different classes. This score does not mean that the lower class group was not happy, but that the group was less happy than the average woman across social class. Notwithstanding, the lower class group reported feelings of happiness that fell between being rather happy and not so happy, leaning towards feelings of positive affect.

Research has often looked at marital status as an indicator of happiness (Diener, Gohn, Suh & Oishi, 2000; Stutzer & Frey, 2006). The study examined the differences in reported levels of happiness across marital status. Table 15 presents this finding.

Table 15: Marital status and happiness-as-affect

Marital status		N	%	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Married	Happiness	507	34.11	1	4	1.86	.884
Living together	Happiness	149	10.02	1	4	2.00	.860
Divorced	Happiness	26	1.74	1	3	1.75	.778
Separated	Happiness	14	.94	1	3	1.68	.594
Widowed	Happiness	133	8.95	1	4	2.15	.880
Single	Happiness	658	44.27	1	4	1.90	.878

We observe that whilst the samples are small, separated and divorced women are happier than married women, single women and women living together. We note that widowed women are least happy amongst the group. Widowed women, whilst still being happy, show lower levels of happiness, falling between the rather happy category and the not so happy category.

I was also interested in the relationship between education and happiness (see Table 16 below).

Table 16: Education and happiness-as-affect

Education		N	%	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
No formal	Happiness	32	2.15	1	4	2.51	.964
Primary	Happiness	162	10.90	1	4	2.22	.927
Incomplete secondary	Happiness	482	32.43	1	4	2.06	.912
Complete secondary	Happiness	675	45.42	1	4	1.79	.810
University without degree	Happiness	73	4.91	1	4	1.44	.646
University with degree	Happiness	62	4.17	1	4	1.64	.775

With regards to educational level, the results indicate that the more educated group scores are lower than the mean and are thus happier than those groups who are less educated. We observe that those participants with no formal education are the least happy across the groups. They however, still report that they are happy, yet the score leans towards the not so happy category.

From an intersectional approach, it is important to look at how race and class interact with reported levels of happiness. Table 17 looks at how women across race and social class report on their levels of happiness.

Table 17: Race, class and happiness-as-affect

Class	Race	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Upper	Black	1.18	7	.417
	White	1.43	6	.800
	Coloured	3.00	1	.000
	Indian	1.00	1	.000
	Total	1.34	15	.673
Upper middle	Black	1.43	66	.612
	White	1.38	88	.607
	Coloured	1.44	10	.524
	Indian	2.06	6	.988
	Total	1.43	170	.628
Lower middle	Black	1.83	205	.810
	White	1.52	35	.608
	Coloured	1.65	15	.611
	Indian	1.99	11	.836
	Other	2.00	2	.000
	Total	1.79	268	.781
Working	Black	1.78	235	.826
	White	1.63	57	.661
	Coloured	1.67	44	.770

	Indian	2.23	8	.733
	Total	1.75	344	.794
Lower	Black	2.13	639	.902
	White	3.33	10	.495
	Coloured	2.80	30	1.042
	Indian	2.19	9	1.039
	Total	2.18	688	.925
Total	Black	1.96	1153	.879
	White	1.58	197	.744
	Coloured	2.00	98	.980
	Indian	2.08	36	.874
	Other	2.00	2	.000
	Total	1.91	1486	.878

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The sample of women in the upper class is very small, however nearly all of the women report feeling very happy. Black women in the upper class were also happier than women within that social class as well as across classes. Only one woman who is coloured and upper class was included in the sample. She reported being not very happy. White women in the upper middle class, middle class and working class report being rather happy in their lives, with the highest mean scores in these groups. At the same time, white women in the lower class are the least happy out of all groups of women across diverse raced backgrounds. In the lower class, black women report the highest mean score and the score indicates that they are rather happy.

6.2.2 Happiness-as-life-satisfaction

This section reports on how women responded to the question “how satisfied are you with your lives as a whole these days?” It looks at women across race, age, class, marital and educational status and how satisfied they are. Overall, the results indicate that women are somewhat satisfied with their lives, with a mean score of 6.66 (SD = 2.27). As was discussed in Chapter Five, a score closer to 10 indicates complete satisfaction with one’s life. The score thus indicate that the women were somewhat satisfied with their lives as a whole.

As indicated in Chapter One, I am interested in how women of different raced backgrounds report on their life satisfaction. Table 18 presents the mean scores for women across race and their reported levels of life satisfaction.

Table 18: Race and happiness-as-life-satisfaction



Race		N	%	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Black	Satisfaction	1153	77.59	1	10	6.50	2.270
White	Satisfaction	197	13.25	3	10	7.77	1.826
Coloured	Satisfaction	98	6.59	1	10	6.44	2.375
Indian	Satisfaction	36	2.42	1	10	5.99	2.239
Other	Satisfaction	2	.13	9	9	9.00	.000

Mirroring the findings on happiness, white women reported higher levels of satisfaction when compared to women of diverse race groups. Whilst not completely satisfied with their lives as a whole, white women indicated that they are somewhat satisfied, leaning towards completely satisfied with their lives as a whole. The mean scores for black and coloured women indicate that they are fairly or somewhat satisfied with their lives as a whole. Indian

women were the least satisfied of the groups, being somewhat dissatisfied with their lives.

How do women across ages compare in their satisfaction with life as a whole? Table 19 presents levels of satisfaction with life as a whole for women across the different age groups.

Table 19: Age and happiness-as-life-satisfaction

Age		N	%	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
16-29	Satisfaction	528	35.53	1	10	6.78	2.171
30-49	Satisfaction	611	41.11	1	10	6.51	2.331
50-85	Satisfaction	347	23.35	1	10	6.72	2.278

We observe that the younger group of women, 16–29 years, reported slightly higher levels of satisfaction as compared to women in the other age groups. Younger women were slightly more satisfied with their lives as a whole than women in the age group 50–85 years of age. Women between the ages of 30–49 were the least satisfied. Notwithstanding, this age group of women still reported being somewhat satisfied with their lives as a whole.

Are upper class women happier than lower class women? The next table reports on happiness-as-life-satisfaction by social class.

Table 20: Social class and happiness-as-life-satisfaction

Class		N	%	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Upper	Satisfaction	15	1.00	4	10	8.28	1.600
Upper middle	Satisfaction	170	11.44	1	10	7.98	1.528
Lower middle	Satisfaction	268	18.03	1	10	6.89	2.023
Working	Satisfaction	344	23.14	1	10	7.10	2.115
Lower	Satisfaction	688	46.29	1	10	5.98	2.357

Upper class women indeed do report higher means for happiness-as-life-satisfaction, with the score indicating that they are completely satisfied with their lives. The upper middle class women report being somewhat satisfied, with scores leaning strongly towards completely satisfied with life. It should however be noted that the sample size for the upper class was quite small (N = 15). Lower class women report being the least satisfied with life. with a mean score of 5.98 (SD = 2.36). This score leans more towards the lower class being somewhat dissatisfied with life as a whole.

Being married has been cited as a contributor towards happiness (Powdthavee, 2009; Seligman, 2002). The table below compares happiness-as-life-satisfaction across marital status.

Table 21: Marital status and happiness-as-life-satisfaction

Marital status		N	%	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Married	Satisfaction	507	34.11	1	10	6.88	2.315
Living together	Satisfaction	149	10.02	1	10	6.28	2.146
Divorced	Satisfaction	26	1.74	4	10	7.28	1.769
Separated	Satisfaction	14	.94	3	10	6.65	2.348
Widowed	Satisfaction	133	8.95	1	10	6.71	2.110
Single	Satisfaction	658	44.27	1	10	6.53	2.282

The mean score for happiness-as-life-satisfaction was 6.66. Divorced women reported the highest level of satisfaction across the groups. Three groups reported lower means than the overall mean: separated women, single women and women who were living together with someone else. Women living together were the least satisfied across the groups. Nonetheless, it should be noted that across the marital status categories, women, regardless of marital status were somewhat satisfied with their lives as a whole.

Do educational qualifications matter to life satisfaction? The results to this question are considered in Table 22.

Table 22: Education and happiness-as-life-satisfaction

Education		N	%	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
No formal	Satisfaction	32	2.15	1	10	5.59	2.860

Primary	Satisfaction	162	10.90	1	10	6.17	2.247
Incomplete secondary	Satisfaction	482	32.43	1	10	6.31	2.392
Complete secondary	Satisfaction	675	45.42	1	10	6.91	2.116
University without degree	Satisfaction	73	4.91	3	10	7.49	1.960
University with degree	Satisfaction	62	4.17	1	10	7.44	1.990

The results for educational qualifications and happiness-as-life-satisfaction were similar to the results on education and happiness-as-affect. Women with no formal schooling reported the lowest levels of life satisfaction, in other words, they reported that they were somewhat dissatisfied with their lives as a whole. Participants with primary schooling and incomplete secondary schooling were somewhat satisfied with their lives as a whole. Women with higher levels of education (university with no degree and university degree) reported considerably higher levels of satisfaction. These groups were nearly completely satisfied with their lives as a whole.

As with happiness-as-affect, I was interested in the intersections of race and class and their associations with life satisfaction. Table 23 presents the findings for life satisfaction for participants across different race groups and class.

Table 23: Race and class by happiness-as-life-satisfaction

Class	Race	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Upper	Black	8.41	7	1.453
	White	8.55	6	1.502
	Coloured	4.00	1	.000
	Indian	8.00	1	.000
	Total	8.28	15	1.600
Upper middle	Black	7.97	66	1.441
	White	8.11	88	1.461
	Coloured	7.50	10	1.700
	Indian	6.93	6	2.672
	Total	7.98	170	1.528
Lower middle	Black	6.85	205	2.020
	White	7.39	35	1.909
	Coloured	6.82	15	1.913
	Indian	5.90	11	2.369
	Other	9.00	2	.000
	Total	6.89	268	2.023
Working	Black	6.92	235	2.146
	White	7.88	57	1.898
	Coloured	7.16	44	2.003

	Indian	6.40	8	2.239
	Total	7.10	344	2.115
Lower	Black	6.06	639	2.347
	White	4.90	10	1.769
	Coloured	4.91	30	2.588
	Indian	4.86	9	1.593
	Total	5.98	688	2.357
Total	Black	6.50	1153	2.270
	White	7.77	197	1.826
	Coloured	6.44	98	2.375
	Indian	5.99	36	2.239
	Other	9.00	2	.000
	Total	6.66	1486	2.265

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White upper class women and white upper middle class were most satisfied with their lives when compared to other groups. Indian women who identified as lower class were least satisfied with their lives when compared with others, reporting that they were somewhat dissatisfied with their lives. White women who identified as lower class were also somewhat dissatisfied with their lives, as were coloured women. Lower class black women were relatively more satisfied with their lives than coloured, white and indian women of the same social class.

6.2.3 Gender equality

In Chapter Five I outlined a number of variables that are linked to gender equality. For example, women were asked questions such as whether they agree or disagree with the question “when jobs are scarce, men should have more rights to jobs than women” and whether they agree or disagree with the question “when a mother works for pay, the children suffer”. In this section, I report on the findings in relation to these gender equality variables.

Given two of the three objectives of this study – namely, to explore women’s reported subjective experiences and perceptions of the effectiveness of gender equality measures; and to explore whether women believe that happiness is or should be linked to gender equality and in what ways – it is necessary to examine whether women think that having the same rights as men is an essential characteristic of democracy. The question on equal rights was asked in the following manner: “Many things are desirable, but not all of them are essential characteristics of democracy. Please tell how essential you think it is as a characteristic of democracy: Women have the same rights as men (hereafter called same rights)”. A score of 1 indicates that it is not an essential characteristic of democracy and 10 indicates that it is.

The results show that women viewed having the same rights as men as an essential element of democracy (mean score = 7.10, SD = 2.46). The table below presents the frequencies related to women’s views on this question.

Table 24: Women have the same rights as men

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	35	2.4	2.4
	2	35	2.3	4.7
	3	77	5.2	9.9
	4	84	5.7	15.5
	5	177	11.9	27.4
	6	160	10.8	38.2
	7	179	12.1	50.3
	8	205	13.8	64.0
	9	198	13.3	77.3
	10	337	22.7	100.0
	Total	1486	100.0	

We observe that more women than not think that having equal rights is an essential characteristic of democracy. It is striking that 15.5% (scores 4 and below) of women do not view equal rights with men as an essential characteristic of democracy. These women are likely to be invested in the normative gender roles of society. Women (and men) often internalise social norms and the gender patterns and roles that they hold in the family, work and society and this, in turn, could affect their happiness (Mencarini & Sironi, 2012).

Agency, or the freedom of choice and control over one’s own life, is an important aspect of gender equality. As indicated in Chapter Five, the question related to agency was asked as follows: “Some people feel they have completely free choice and control over their lives, while other people feel that what they do has no real effect on what happens to them”. Respondents could indicate on a scale of 1 to 10 whether they had no choice or a great deal of choice to indicate how much freedom and control they had over their lives. Table 25 looks at whether women considered that they have agency or not.


Table 25: Agency

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	40	2.7	2.7
	2	26	1.8	4.4
	3	21	1.4	5.8
	4	57	3.8	9.6
	5	169	11.4	21.0
	6	205	13.8	34.8
	7	277	18.6	53.4
	8	336	22.6	76.1
	9	168	11.3	87.4
	10	188	12.6	100.0
	Total	1486	100.0	

Table 25 indicates that just under half the women (46.5%) reported having a great degree of agency (a score of 8 and above). Only a small percentage of women (9.6%) reported having very little agency (a score of 1–4), and approximately 43.8% of women reported having moderate degrees of agency. The majority of women thus reported having agency, the freedom to choose and control over their lives. This is further reflected in a mean score of 7.05 (SD = 2.09), which is relatively high.

Participants were asked to indicate what they consider the most serious problems for the world as a whole. The table below reflects the findings.

Table 26: Participants' priorities for the world



	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
People living in poverty and need	800	53.9	53.9
Discrimination against women and girls	280	18.9	72.7
Poor sanitation and infectious diseases	210	14.1	86.9
Inadequate education	129	8.6	95.5
Environmental pollution	67	4.5	100
Total	1486	100	

Most women considered poverty and those living in need as the most serious problem. Discrimination against women and girls were considered the next priority concern for women.

In Table 27, I present the findings relating to women's views with regards to the rights to jobs. The question posed was "when jobs are scarce, men should have more rights to jobs than women".

Table 27: When jobs are scarce, men should have more right to a job than women

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	370	24.9	24.9
	Neither	310	20.9	45.8
	Disagree	806	54.2	100
	Total	1486	100	

With regards to employment opportunities, overall, we see that slightly more than half of the women disagree that men should have more access to jobs when jobs are scarce. In other words, in their view, women have as much right to jobs, as men do, when jobs are scarce.

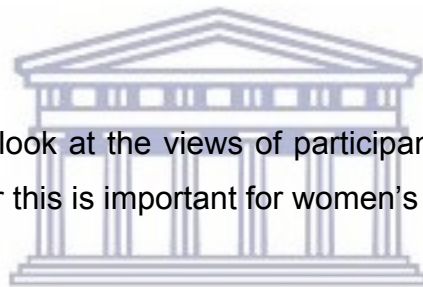
Does it cause problems when a woman earns more money than her husband? In Table 28, the findings to this question are presented.

Table 28: If a woman earns more money than her husband, it's almost certain to cause problems

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	489	32.9	32.9
	Neither	542	36.5	69.4

Disagree	455	30.6	100
Total	1486	100	

Women’s views were nearly evenly split when it came to the question of whether women earning more money than her husband would cause problems. Nearly one in three women thought that it would cause problems if a woman earns more money than her husband. This result reflects the reality that society is very patriarchal, and that at a micro and macro level, normative values pertaining to the role of women have not shifted nor have they been disrupted despite the enactment of legislation. It is surprising that 36.9% of the women neither agreed nor disagreed. However, it is not clear what this response would mean for this group of women.



In the following table, I look at the views of participants in relation to women having jobs and whether this is important for women’s independence.

Table 29: Having a job is the best way for a woman to be an independent person

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	825	55.5	55.5
	Neither	407	27.4	82.9
	Disagree	254	17.1	100
	Total	1486	100	

More than half of the participants felt that having a job is the best way for women to be independent. Approximately two out of every ten respondents

were undecided on this question. Nearly two out of every 10 respondents thought that having a job is not the best way for a woman to be independent. This finding could be interpreted that this group of women held more conservative views when it comes to the question of jobs and independence or alternatively, that they thought that there were other factors which indicated women's independence more.

Do women think that children suffer when mothers work? This results to this question are presented in Table 30. below.

Table 30: When a mother works for pay, the children suffer

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	324	21.8	21.8
	Agree	507	34.1	55.9
	Disagree	399	26.8	82.8
	Strongly Disagree	256	17.2	100
	Total	1486	100	

Women held strong views on this question. We observe that the majority of women (55.9%) feel that children do suffer when the mother works. A large percentage of women (44.8%) disagreed that the children suffer when mothers work. This finding is best understood within the context of care work. Women are, in most instances, and disproportionately so, responsible for care work (as well as housework) (Posel & Casale, 2015; Statistics South Africa, 2013; World Bank, 2012). Women's care responsibilities have not decreased with their uptake in more formal work sectors, nor have men's care responsibilities increased commensurately with women's uptake in paid

employment (Kato-Wallace, Barker, Eads & Levtov, 2014). The result is thus not surprising that women would feel that children suffer when they work. This finding is discussed later in relation to women’s agency and happiness.

As discussed in Chapter Four, gender equality is often measured by looking at the representation of women in politics. Women’s views on whether men make better political leaders than women or not is thus an important indicator of an aspect of government’s policy on gender equality.

Table 31: On the whole, men make better political leaders than women do

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	260	17.5	17.5
	Agree	477	32.1	49.6
	Disagree	435	29.3	78.9
	Strongly disagree	314	21.1	100
	Total	1486	100	

The views on this question are very polarised. Only a slight majority of women disagree with the statement that men make better political leaders than women do. A large percentage of women (49.6%) however do believe that men would make better political leaders than women would. A considerable number of women thus hold conservative views on the role of women in politics and the value that women bring to politics.

Access to education is often used as a marker of a gender equal society. In the table below, women's values pertaining to higher education for girls and boys are presented.

Table 32: A university education is more important for a boy than for a girl

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	212	14.3	14.3
	Agree	358	24.1	38.4
	Disagree	432	29.1	67.4
	Strongly disagree	484	32.6	100
	Total	1486	100	

The majority of women do not agree that a university education is more important for boys than girls. This reflects a positive view towards the education of girls. However, more than a third of the respondents did consider a university education as being more important for boys than girls. This holds implications as to whether families or women would prioritise tertiary education for boys over girls.

The Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998 seeks to address and promote equity in the workplace, by introducing affirmative action measures targetting designated groups, including women and black people. Women have thus moved into positions of decision-making in the workplace. The results presented below provide an indication of whether there has been a shift in views and attitudes on womens' roles in workplaces, and specifically as leaders in business.

Table 33: On the whole, men make better business executives than women do

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	228	15.4	15.4
	Agree	488	32.9	48.2
	Disagree	429	28.8	77.1
	Strongly disagree	341	22.9	100
	Total	1486	100	

Just over half of the women indicated that men do not make better business executives than women. Notwithstanding, a large percentage of women (48.2%) indicated that men do make better business executives than women. Again, this indicates that women might not be viewed as good business leaders once they are in such positions, and it holds implications for encouraging young women and girls to enter into work spaces considered the domain of men.

In Table 34 I present the results related to having paid employment juxtaposed to being a housewife, and whether holding either position can be fulfilling.

Table 34: Being a housewife is just as fulfilling as working for pay

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	281	18.9	18.9

Agree	555	37.4	56.3
Disagree	370	24.9	81.2
Strongly disagree	280	18.8	100
Total	1486	100	

As is seen from the above table, more than half the women are of the view that it is as fulfilling being a housewife as working in formal paid employment. This finding possibly reflects normative views about the role of women in society and the value of women's paid employment and role in building the economy.

Looking at the findings of the five questions presented immediately above, we observe that nearly equal numbers of women hold progressive and conservative views on the gender equality variables related to working mothers, men make better political leaders, men are better business executives, and being a housewife is as fulfilling as working for pay. It is only on the question of a university education being more important for a boy than a girl that there is a strong view that it is not more important for a boy to have a university degree than for a girl. The results furthermore reflect that sometimes our stance towards gender equality is not clear-cut, with it being either progressive or conservative, but that our stance may be rather complex and nuanced.

These findings are an important marker of women's views on gender equality, and also speak to some of the implications of government's policies and programmes on gender equality.

6.3 Assessing the relationship between key gender and demographic variables with happiness-as-affect and happiness-as-life-satisfaction

In Chapter Five, I put forward two hypotheses which I would test related to life satisfaction and happiness. Prior to running any further analyses to test the hypotheses, correlations were produced to ascertain the relationship between key variables, including the gender related variables and demographics with the life satisfaction and affect variable.

6.3.1 The relationship between key gender and demographic variables and happiness-as-life-satisfaction

The correlation results for a number of key variables with happiness-as-life-satisfaction are as follows:

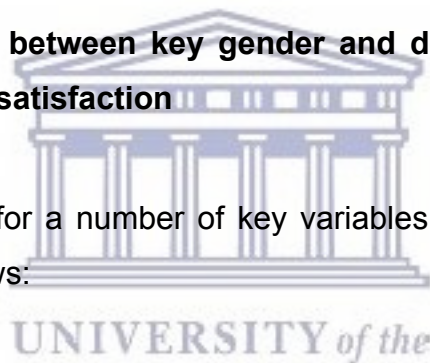


Table 35: Pearson's Correlation between happiness-as-life-satisfaction and key variables

	Happiness-as-life-satisfaction	Agency	GE_DIVTOT	Same rights
Happiness-as-life-satisfaction	1	.496**	-.052*	-.011
Agency	.496**	1	-.004	.050
GE_DIVTOT	-.052*	-.004	1	.046
Same rights	-.011	.050	.046	1

Same rights	-.011	.050	.046	1
	.675	.052	.074	

* $p < .05$, two-tailed. ** $p < .01$, two-tailed.

Agency was significantly related to happiness-as-life-satisfaction. This positive relationship means that as participants felt that they have more control over their lives and free choice, their life satisfaction increased.

There was a significant negative relationship between the gender equality composite diverse variable (GE DIVTOT) and happiness-as-life-satisfaction. This implies that as the scores on the GE DIVTOT increased, which was related to views becoming more progressive, life satisfaction decreased.

There was no significant relationship between whether women and men having the same rights is an essential characteristic of democracy and life satisfaction.

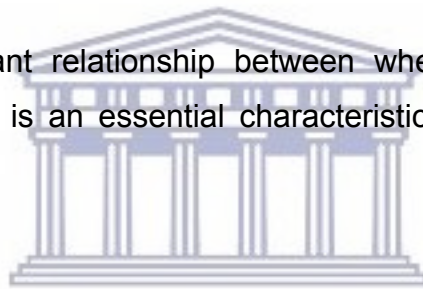


Table 36: Correlation (Spearman's rho) between happiness-as-life-satisfaction and key variables

	Happiness-as-life-satisfaction	Class	Race ⁵⁵	Jobs scarce	Women earning more	Independence
Happiness-as-life-satisfaction	1.000	-.287**	.114**	-.034	-.018	.027
Class	.000	1.000	.000	.188	.486	.297
Race ⁵⁵	-.287**	-.353**	1.000	.024	-.008	-.027
Jobs scarce	.000	.000	.344	1.000	.760	.292
Women earning more	.000	.000	.000	.760	1.000	.292
Independence	.027	.297	-.027	.292	.292	1.000

⁵⁵ The "Other" category was excluded from race for the correlation as there were only two weighted cases in this category. There was thus insufficient data to run the correlation.

Race	.114**	-.353**	1.000	.014	.066*	.048
	.000	.000	.	.592	.011	.066
Jobs scarce	-.034	.024	.014	1.000	.375**	-.079**
	.188	.344	.592	.	.000	.002
Women earning more	-.018	-.008	.066*	.375**	1.000	-.318**
	.486	.760	.011	.000	.	.000
Independence	.027	-.027	.048	-.079**	-.318**	1.000
	.297	.292	.066	.002	.000	.

* $p < .05$, two-tailed. ** $p < .01$, two-tailed.

Class correlated significantly with happiness-as-life-satisfaction. This was a negative relationship. This implies that life satisfaction decreased from women in upper class to women in lower class. In other words women in upper class were more satisfied with life than the participants identifying as lower class. Race was also significantly related to happiness-as-life-satisfaction.

In addition, there was no significant relationship between jobs scarce, women earning more, independence and happiness-as-life-satisfaction.

Based on the results of the correlation statistics, a decision was made to include only the variables that were correlated with happiness-as-life-satisfaction as predictors in the regression analysis.

The results of Hypothesis 1 are presented and interpreted below.

Hypothesis 1:

H₀ = Agency, class, GE DIVTOT and race⁵⁶ are not significant predictors of life satisfaction.

H₁ = Agency, class, GE DIVTOT and race are significant predictors of life satisfaction.

The Null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 37: Agency, class, GE DIVTOT and race as predictors of happiness-as-life-satisfaction

	B	SE B	β	Sig
1 (Constant)	2.869	.179		.000
Agency	.537	.024	.496***	.000
2 (Constant)	2.723	.176		.000
Agency	.490	.024	.453***	.000
Lower vs upper class	1.761	.497	.078***	.000
Lower vs upper middle class	1.423	.166	.200***	.000
Lower vs lower middle class	.592	.138	.100***	.000
Lower vs working class	.815	.127	.152***	.000
3 (Constant)	3.218	.239		.000
Agency	.489	.024	.452***	.000
Lower vs upper	1.747	.495	.077***	.000

⁵⁶ The "Other" category was excluded from race for the regression as there was insufficient data to run the regression.

	Lower vs upper middle class	1.456	.165	.205***	.000
	Lower vs lower middle class	.596	.138	.101***	.000
	Lower vs working class	.846	.127	.158***	.000
	GE_DIVTOT	-.039	.013	-.067**	.002
4	(Constant)	3.265	.239		.000
	Agency	.486	.024	.449***	.000
	Lower vs upper class	1.592	.499	.071**	.001
	Lower vs upper middle class	1.250	.185	.176***	.000
	Lower vs lower middle class	.562	.139	.095***	.000
	Lower vs working class	.813	.130	.151***	.000
	GE_DIVTOT	-.040	.013	-.069**	.002
	Black vs white	.446	.167	.067**	.007
	Black vs coloured	-.327	.202	-.036	.107
	Black vs indian	-.460	.323	-.031	.154

Note: $R^2 = .25$ for Step 1, $\Delta R^2 = .29$ for Step 2, $\Delta R^2 = .30$ for Step 3. $\Delta R^2 = .31$ for Step 4, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

The results indicate that the overall model is successful in predicting life satisfaction. In other words, agency, class, GE DIVTOT as well as race are significant predictors of life satisfaction. The above table further indicates the prediction between life satisfaction and each of the predictor variables. The result of each of the predictor variables and life satisfaction is discussed below:

- Agency ($\beta = .45$) is a significant predictor of life satisfaction. This indicates that as agency increases by one unit, life satisfaction increases by .45 units. This interpretation holds true if the other predictors are held constant.
- Class is a significant predictor of life satisfaction. As is observed, levels of life satisfaction increase more in upper class as compared to lower class participants, it increases more in upper middle class as compared to lower middle class participants, as well as participants identifying as lower middle class and working class as compared to lower class participants.
- The gender equality diverse composite variable (GE DIVTOT) is a significant predictor of life satisfaction. This implies that as participants' views on the gender equality diverse variable becomes more progressive, life satisfaction decreases.
- With regards to race, we observe a significant relationship between life satisfaction only for the white women as compared to black women (the reference group). In other words, life satisfaction for white women increases more when compared to those who had identified as black. For coloured and indian participants, the results were not significant. This implies that life satisfaction scores were no different for coloured women as compared to black women, nor where they different for indian women as compared black women.

6.3.2 The relationship between key variables and happiness-as-affect

Table 38: Correlation (Spearman's rho) between key variables and happiness-as-affect

	Happiness-as-affect	Agency	Same rights
Happiness-as-affect	1.000	-.219**	.099**
	.	.000	.000

Agency	-.219**	1.000	.105**
	.000	.	.000
Same rights	.099**	.105**	1.000
	.000	.000	.

** $p < .01$, two-tailed.

The correlation results for key variables with happiness-as-affect are as follows:

- There was a negative, significant relationship between agency and happiness-as-affect⁵⁷, $r_s = .22$, p (two-tailed) $< .001$. This negative relationship means that as participants felt that they have more control over their lives and free choice, they experienced more positive affect or they became more happy.
- There was a significant relationship between whether women and men having the same rights is an essential characteristic of democracy and happiness-as-affect, $r_s = .10$, p (two-tailed) $< .001$. This result indicates that as equal rights between men and women became more of an essential characteristic of democracy for participants, they also became happier (more positive affect).

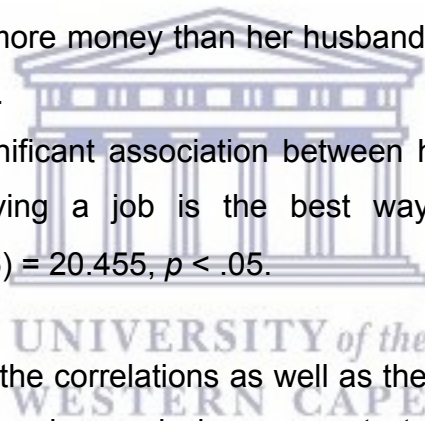
In order to ascertain the relationship between the happiness-as-affect variable and a number of key categorical variables, the Chi-square statistic was run. The results of the Chi-square are reported on below:

- There was a significant relationship between happiness-as-affect and class $\chi^2 (12) = 164.609$, $p < .001$. It should be noted that two cells (10%) had an expected count of less than 5. However, given that this was a large sample, and as the contingency table can be expected to

⁵⁷ Where a score of 1 = very happy, 2 = rather happy, 3 = not very happy and 4 = not at all happy.

have approximately 20% of expected frequencies below 5, this result is acceptable (Field, 2013).

- There was a significant relationship between happiness-as-affect and race⁵⁸ $\chi^2 (9) = 45.596, p < .001$. One cell (6.3%) had an expected count less than 5. However, as indicated with class (above), this result is acceptable, as the contingency table can be expected to have approximately 20% of expected frequencies below 5 (Field, 2013).
- There was a significant association between happiness-as-affect and views that gender discrimination is a priority $\chi^2 (3) = 10.311, p < 0.5$.
- Happiness-as-affect was significantly associated with the variable when jobs are scarce, men have more rights to jobs $\chi^2 (6) = 23.882, p < .05$.
- Happiness-as-affect was significantly associated with the variable women earning more money than her husband causes problems $\chi^2 (6) = 13.275, p < .05$.
- There was a significant association between happiness-as-affect and the variable having a job is the best way for a woman to be independent $\chi^2 (6) = 20.455, p < .05$.



Based on the results of the correlations as well as the Chi-square statistics, a multinomial logistic regression analysis was run to test whether agency, the gender related variables, race and class are significant predictors of happiness-as-affect. The results are presented below.

Hypothesis 2:

H₀ = Agency, class, jobs scarce, women earning more, independence, same rights, gender discrimination and race⁵⁹ are not significant predictors of feelings of happiness.

⁵⁸ The "Other" category was excluded from race for the correlation as there were only two weighted cases in this category. There was thus insufficient data to run the correlation.

⁵⁹ The "Other" category was excluded from race for the regression as there was insufficient data to run the regression.

H_1 = Agency, class, jobs scarce, women earning more, independence, same rights, gender discrimination and race are significant predictors of feelings of happiness.

The Null Hypothesis is rejected.

The model fit information is provided in Table 39. This information indicates whether the model has improved from the baseline as a result of entering the predictor variables.

Table 39: Model Fit Information

Model	Model Fitting Criteria			Likelihood Ratio Tests		
	AIC	BIC	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Intercept Only	3378.074	3393.982	3372.074			
Final	3124.990	3395.431	3022.990	349.084	48	.000

The Chi-square in the above table is significant, indicating that the independent variables have a significant effect on predicting happiness. Said differently, the final model explains a significant amount of the original variability.

Is our model a good fit for the data? The results are presented in Table 40.

Table 40: Goodness-of-Fit

	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Pearson	3838.468	3510	.000
Deviance	2857.066	3510	1.000

The table above gives us contradictory results about whether the predicted values are different from the observed values. As can be seen from the deviance statistic, it indicates that the model is a good fit to the data ($p = 1.00$, in other words a non-significant result indicates a good relationship). However, the Pearson indicates that the predicted values are significantly different from the observed values ($p < .001$). When comparing the dispersion parameters to ascertain whether the difference in the statistics is caused by overdispersion, the results indicate that there is no cause of concern. We see that the deviance value is $.81^{60}$, which is close to the ideal statistic of 1 and that the Pearson value is 1.09^{61} , which is greater than 1 but not close to 2.

Whilst the model is a good model in predicting happiness, it is important to ascertain what the significance of each of the predictors are to the model. The results of the likelihood ratio tests are presented in Table 41.

$$^{60} \chi^2_{\text{Deviance}} = \frac{X^2_{\text{Deviance}}}{df} = \frac{2857.066}{3510} = .81$$

$$^{61} \chi^2_{\text{Pearson}} = \frac{X^2_{\text{Pearson}}}{df} = \frac{3838.468}{3510} = 1.09$$

Table 41: Likelihood Ratio Tests

Effect	Model Fitting Criteria			Likelihood Ratio Tests		
	AIC of Reduced Model	BIC of Reduced Model	-2 Log Likelihood of Reduced Model	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Intercept	3124.990	3395.431	3022.990 ^a	.000	0	.
Gender discrimination	3130.684	3385.217	3034.684	11.694	3	.009
Class	3227.114	3433.922	3149.114	126.124	12	.000
Race	3125.546	3348.261	3041.546	18.555	9	.029
Jobs scarce	3145.149	3383.773	3055.149	32.159	6	.000
Women earning more	3130.507	3369.130	3040.507	17.516	6	.008
Independence	3134.427	3373.051	3044.427	21.436	6	.002
Agency	3170.298	3424.830	3074.298	51.308	3	.000
Same rights	3157.140	3411.672	3061.140	38.149	3	.000

Based on the likelihood ratios we observe the following:

- The variable, gender discrimination, enables us to predict happiness, $X^2(3) = 11.694$, $p < .05$.
- Class is a significant predictor of happiness, $X^2(12) = 126.124$, $p < .001$.
- Race allows us to significantly predict happiness, $X^2(9) = 18.555$, $p < .05$.
- The variable, jobs scarce, allows us to significant predict happiness, $X^2(6) = 32.159$, $p < .001$.

- Women earning more than her husband enables us to significantly predict happiness, $X^2(6) = 17.516, p < .05$.
- Having a job as a way for women to be independent allows us to significantly predict happiness, $X^2(6) = 21.436, p < .05$.
- Agency is a significant predictor of happiness, $X^2(3) = 51.308, p < .001$.
- Whether you believe that women have the same rights as men is an essential characteristic of democracy enables us to predict happiness, $X^2(3) = 38.149, p < .001$.

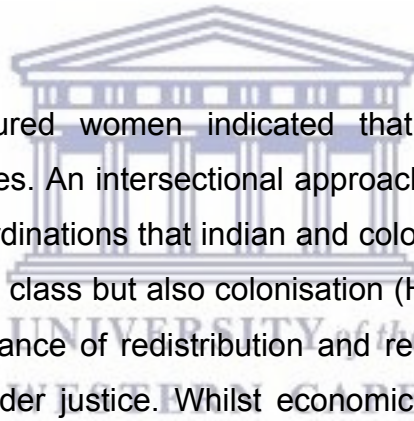
I now turn to the discussion of the results presented above.

6.4 Discussion

As can be observed from the findings, women report positive affect and are satisfied with their lives as a whole. The trends in relation to happiness-as-affect and happiness-as-life-satisfaction mirror each other. We observe that white women indicate higher positive affect than women across diverse racial groups, and also report high levels of satisfaction with life. We observe that Indian women reported lower levels of affect, although they still reported being rather happy. Indian women were also the least satisfied of the groups, being somewhat dissatisfied with their lives.

When considering levels of happiness-as-affect and happiness-as-life-satisfaction across different racial backgrounds and class, we see that white women in upper middle class, lower middle class and working class show more positive affect and higher levels of life satisfaction than women of other racial groups within the particular class. The results are different for the upper class in relation to happiness-as-affect, with black women reporting the highest levels of affect. Poor women reported being the least satisfied with their lives as well as reporting lower levels of affect. The results indicate that poor white women are the least happy (affect) across race groups and poor Indian women are the least satisfied with their lives.

The findings of this study clearly reflect the heterogeneity of women and the importance of an intersectional approach in understanding happiness. As Crenshaw (1989, 1991), Hill Collins (1990), hooks (1981) and others have shown, an intersectional approach is critical in understanding the multiple oppressions black women have faced, and is critical in rendering their oppressions and how their oppressions intersect, visible. An intersectional framework further shows how white women have benefitted from their locatedness as white women but also from their class position, thus enjoying privileged positions on multiple fronts. The findings of this study thus reflect the privileged position of rich, white women indicating that they have benefitted from colonialism and the policies of apartheid, and that they continue to enjoy high levels of satisfaction with life and feelings of positive affect.



Poor Indian and coloured women indicated that they were somewhat dissatisfied with their lives. An intersectional approach is once again useful in understanding the subordinations that Indian and coloured women have faced on the basis of race and class but also colonisation (Herr, 2014). The findings also point to the importance of redistribution and recognition (Fraser, 2005, 2007a) in ensuring gender justice. Whilst economic redress is important, it cannot be done within a vacuum and without looking at race. Improving the material conditions of the poor, but also targeting Indian and coloured poor (because of injustices based on race), will see an improvement in their levels of happiness (Møller, 2007).

The results for lower class white and black women are also interesting. Black women as compared to white women (in lower class), showed higher levels of positive affect and satisfaction with life. Given the intersection of race and class, as well as our history of apartheid and colonialism, one might well have expected that black women would be most dissatisfied with life as well as report the highest levels of negative affect. Both black and white women's position can however best be explained using Social Comparison Theory. Social Comparison Theory argues that individuals would compare themselves

to others, and their lives to the lives of others around them. I would thus argue that when lower class white women compare themselves to others, and I would suggest that they would compare themselves to other white women (the majority of whom are employed and not poor), they are dissatisfied and rather unhappy with their lives. Black women would also compare themselves to other black women, the majority of whom are poor and unemployed (Statistics South Africa, 2014), and would thus see that their lives are comparable with other black persons. They would thus be less dissatisfied with their lives as a whole.

When considering age, we observed that younger women were more satisfied and showed more positive affect than older women. Whilst I did not investigate the relationship between age and other factors such as health, marriage and children, amongst others, which could possibly all have an impact on life satisfaction and happiness-as-affect, some scholars have argued that there is a U-shaped relationship between age and happiness (Oswald, 1997). This U-shaped relationship implies that younger and older people are happier and that happiness is lowest around the age of 40. Other scholars have argued that there is no positive relationship between age and happiness (Frey & Stutzer, 2002a). For various reasons, Frey and Stutzer (2002a) have argued that it is difficult to capture the influence of age on happiness, given that, amongst others, the meaning of happiness may change with age or that a change in happiness over time can be attributed to the lapse of time and not to age itself.

Marriage has often been cited as having a positive effect on happiness. Scholars have argued that married people are most often happier than people who are not married (Diener, Gohn, Suh & Oishi, 2000; Stutzer & Frey, 2006). Easterlin (n.d.) based on various studies also agrees with this notion that marriage has a “positive effect on happiness, whilst dissolution has a permanently negative effect” (p. 10). The findings of this study do not support the finding that married women are happier than unmarried women. Notwithstanding that women, regardless of marital status, indicated that they were somewhat satisfied with life and rather happy, divorced women reported

the highest satisfaction levels as well as more positive affect amongst the groups. This result supports the research of Layard, Clark and Senik (2012), who have found that where couples have divorced, their life satisfaction increased after the divorce as compared to the three years preceding separation. Furthermore, we note that women who reported living together reported being least satisfied with their lives. Societies, which value heteronormativity, often place pressure on women to have heterosexual marriages, with great value being placed on marriage. For the women living together, it could be that they have expectations of being married. They may be invested in normative heterosexual relations, and thus are less satisfied than the other groups as the marriage expectation has not been met. Alternatively, they could be unhappy in the relationship due to the nature of the relationship. As discussed in Chapter Three, marriage and heterosexual relationships can be sites of oppression. The pressure exerted by heteronormative gender regimes could compel women to stay in these oppressive relationships with the lure of the promise of happiness (Ahmed, 2010).

Having emerged from a long and violent history of colonialism and apartheid, building a non-racist and non-sexist country was one of the founding principles of a new, democratic South Africa. To this end, as discussed in Chapter Four, numerous legislation, policies and programmes were implemented to reverse the injustices of the past. The findings related to the gender equality variables thus provide a picture of the values and views that women hold in relation to the gender equality measures tested here, and speak to the government's gender justice and gender equality interventions.

It is not surprising that women in this study indicated that poverty was a key priority for the world. South Africa continues to be a very unequal society and poverty is a daily experience for many black women. Approximately four out of every ten female headed-households do not have any employed person in the household (Statistics South Africa, 2014). And whilst approximately 68% of females are employed in the formal economy, about 30% of females find themselves in more precarious job opportunities in the informal sector,

agriculture and as domestic workers (Statistics South Africa, 2014). Unemployment amongst females is also higher amongst blacks and coloureds (Statistics South Africa, 2014). Poverty is thus not only gendered but it is also linked to gender equality.

Most women in this study value gender equality. At face value, one could thus argue that government's gendered efforts to bring about a more gender equal society are on track and supported by women. Of concern, however, is the 15% of women who do not value gender equality. Looking more closely at the results, we further observe that women's views on gender equality are quite diverse and complex. So whilst the majority of women had indicated that gender equality is an important aspect of democracy, their views on some of the gender related questions are not reflective of this stance, but rather one that supports patriarchy and normative gender roles and ideas about gender. However, the results also reflect the complexity of gender equality – gender equality opportunities may present themselves as opportunities, but in the daily lives of women, it is difficult to take up these opportunities or taking up these opportunities may result in other challenges for women.

As discussed in Chapter Four, legislation, policies and programmes have been introduced with the aim of bringing about gender justice and gender equality. The findings of this study show that women view gender equality as an important aspect of democracy, and further shows that they have agency, which is important in ensuring that gender equality in outcomes is achieved. However, the results show that there has been very little shift in normative views of gender, i.e. that women are not meant to earn more than men and that women still bear the responsibility for care activities, especially as related to children. So whilst policies may have shifted, structurally, gender inequality is still in operation at a micro as well as macro level.

Over the years, women have increasingly taken up paid employment. For working class women this has always been the case where they could get a job. As shown, this has not decreased their care and housework responsibilities, nor have men taken up more care housework responsibilities

(Kato-Wallace, Barker, Eads & Levtov, 2014; Levtov, van der Gaag, Greene, Kaufman & Barker, 2015; OECD, 2014). So children could suffer when the main caregiver works. However, they do not suffer because their mothers work, as the burden of care should not be the responsibility of women only. However, society devalues the role of men in care activities, and men's involvement in care is not supported as it is not considered men's work (Morrell & Jewkes, 2014). In addition, in neoliberal states, the responsibilities of care are shifted from the public sphere to the private sphere, and hence to women and girls (Reddy, Meyer, Shefer & Meyiwa, 2014). However, not all women experience the burden of care in the same way. It is often black, poor women who are most affected, as middle and upper class women are able to outsource care work. So whilst women value gender equality (as shown in the study), and may want to take up gender equality opportunities, it leads to them feeling that children suffer. Women thus not only have to balance and navigate their time and resources, but also have to cope with the emotional turmoil that working may result in, if they believe that their children are suffering. The opportunities that present themselves as gender equal opportunities are thus, in reality, not real opportunities for women who are primarily responsible for care work in the home. Gender equality in the workplace, and as indicated by the number of hours women are in paid employment, should go hand in hand with the reduction of hours spent on unpaid work for women, as well as the reduction of the number of hours in paid work by men, and an increase in the number of hours spent in unpaid work for men (OECD, 2014).

The results of this study show that women are invested in patriarchy. Unjust social practices are often maintained and reproduced through behaviours and practices that are considered everyday and normal. In this way, women may also reproduce and maintain patriarchal practices, and may even have internalised these gender unequal practices (Helman & Ratele, 2016; Sen, 1995; World Bank, 2012). Women frequently internalise beliefs that men make better business leader, political leaders, etc. and that women are subordinate to men, as is evident in these findings. We know that gender inequality is inherently bad for both women and men and for society as a

whole (Hearn, 2007; United Nations, 2008; World Bank, 2012). Reproducing gender inequality is thus bad for women and men. The question is, how do we disrupt these learned behaviours and undo women's investment in patriarchy, especially in a society where heteronormative gender roles and patriarchy are the social order of the day.

A number of the gender related variables were not significantly correlated with happiness-as-life-satisfaction nor were they significant predictors of happiness-as-life-satisfaction. These include the variables: (i) "same rights" (women's views that equal rights between men and women are an essential characteristic of democracy; (ii) "jobs scarce" (when jobs are scarce men have more right to jobs); (iii) "earning more" (women earning more than their husbands is a problem); and (iv) "independence" (women having jobs is an important aspect of independence). These individual gender equality related variables appeared not to be useful variables to include in the model. In addition, these variables may not be measuring gender equality related to jobs in any significant manner. Future studies may consider using different questions to measure gender equality related to jobs. Different questions related to gender equality may prove more reliable and valid in predicting life satisfaction.



In contrast to the correlation and regression findings related to a number of the gender related variables and life satisfaction, the association between these variables to happiness-as-affect were significant. These variables include: (i) "same rights" (women's views that equal rights between men and women are an essential characteristic of democracy; (ii) "jobs scarce" (when jobs are scarce men have more right to jobs); (iii) "earning more" (women earning more than their husbands is a problem); (iv) "independence" (women having jobs is an important aspect of independence) and (v) "gender discrimination" (discrimination against women and girls is a priority). These variables were significantly correlated with happiness-as-affect. In addition, these variables were significant predictors of happiness-as-affect. The differing results between these variables and happiness-as-affect and happiness-as-life-satisfaction are interesting, as the assumption would be that

the nature of the relationship would be similar. However, the results related to happiness-as-affect provide support for research that shows that gender equality is associated to happiness (Holter, 2014).

Agency was significantly associated with happiness-as-life-satisfaction and happiness-as-affect. Agency was also found to predict happiness-as-life-satisfaction as well as happiness-as-affect. This association between agency, life satisfaction and affect supports research by Sen (1995, 1999) and Nussbaum (1999), who maintain that agency is central to women's well-being. The two scholars put agency at the centre of their capabilities approach (Nussbaum, 2000; Sen, 1993). Furthermore, agency is linked to women achieving their capabilities. Not only is agency central to happiness, but also women's ability to pursue the goals and values that they deem important.

The study found that the diverse gender equality related variable (GE DIVTOT) has a significant negative relationship with life satisfaction (as can be seen from Table 6.25). This implies that as women become more progressive in their views and more aware of gender inequalities around them, their satisfaction with life decreases.

As opposed to the significant relationship observed with life satisfaction, GE DIVTOT was not significantly correlated to happiness-as-affect. This is surprising and should be investigated further in subsequent studies.

Class was both correlated to as well as a predictor of happiness-as-affect. In addition, class had a significant association with happiness-as-life-satisfaction. When compared with the lower class as the reference group, upper -, upper middle -, lower middle - and working class members' life satisfaction increased. These findings support research by Frey and Stutzer (2002b), who have argued that rich people are happier. However, the relationship between income (and thus class) and life satisfaction is not a straightforward one (as seen in discussions in Chapter Three). Some researchers such as Easterlin (1974, 1995) have argued that raising the income of all will not necessarily nor automatically translate into raising the

happiness levels of all. However, as previously stated, absolute income does have an impact on the happiness of those living below the poverty line (Kingston & Knight, 2007). Some scholars have further argued that money is a means to facilitate well-being (Robeyns, 2003; Sen, 1992), or that economic redress is important for social justice (Fraser, 2000, 2007a). Economic redress is essential in enabling women's equals participation with their peers. Because of class and the lack of resources, women, who have identified as lower and working class, would have difficulties participating equally with their peers, and have difficulty in achieving their capabilities. The redistribution of resources is key in ensuring that women have independence and voice, and that they maintain this independence and voice (Fraser, 2007a). In addition, the redistribution of resources would allow women to access other opportunities such as education and better paid jobs, and thus facilitate participatory parity and achievement of the minimum threshold of capabilities.

Race was significantly correlated with happiness-as-affect, and it was a predictor of happiness. This mirrors the findings of race and happiness-as-life-satisfaction. We observe a significant relationship between life satisfaction of the white women, as opposed to those who had identified as black (the reference group). In other words, life satisfaction for whites increases more when compared to black women. For coloured and indian participants, the results were not significant. This implies that life satisfaction scores for coloured or indian women did not change as compared to black women. This can best be understood from an intersectional perspective, and taking our colonial and apartheid history into account. The positionality of black, coloured and indian women participants appear to be closely related to each other. White women were and, in some cases, continue to be privileged on the basis of class and education, amongst others. The intersection of these positionalities thus potentially locates white women in a position qualitatively different to black women, thus signaling a difference in life satisfaction between white women and other women.

In conclusion, this chapter has reported on and discussed the findings of the quantitative study on the associations between gender equality and

happiness. I firstly set out to look at whether women are happy or not, and who are the women who are happy. Secondly, I investigated what value women ascribe to gender equality. Thirdly, I presented the findings of the inferential statistics, looking at the correlation between happiness-as-affect and gender equality, as well as between happiness-as-life-satisfaction and gender equality.

Most women are happy. Amongst the women, white women, upper class women, younger women, educated women and women who are separated reported the highest levels of happiness-as-affect. Similar patterns are observed with regards to happiness-as-life-satisfaction, with the only difference being that divorced women, rather than women who are separated, reported highest levels of satisfaction. Across race and class, it was white women who had most positive affect within the particular class, except for upper and lower class, where black women were most happy. With regards to happiness-as-life-satisfaction, white women were most satisfied with their lives across the classes, except for the lower class, where black women were most satisfied. An intersectional framework and Social Comparison Theory was used to interpret these results.

To a large extent, women in the study value gender equality and express gender equal views. Concomitantly, their views reflect the complexity of gender equality, with women expressing views valuing gender equal as well as normative views of gender and gender relations. Women are at times invested in patriarchy, maintaining and reproducing patriarchy, and at other times challenging heteronormativity.

Returning to our main question on whether gender equality and happiness are linked, I observe that there is a link between gender equality and happiness. A significant association is observed between women's agency and happiness, with women's satisfaction with life and affect increasing as their agency increased. A significant relationship was further observed between a number of diverse gender equality variables (GE DIVTOT) and happiness-as-life-satisfaction, indicating that as women became more aware of gender

inequalities, their level of life satisfaction decreased. However, there was no relationship between GE DIVTOT and happiness-as-affect.

The study also found that some of the gender equality measures used in this study were not significantly correlated with happiness-as-life-satisfaction. These variables included (i) “same rights” (women’s views that equal rights between men and women are an essential characteristic of democracy; (ii) “jobs scarce” (when jobs are scarce men have more right to jobs); (iii) “earning more” (women earning more than their husbands are a problem); and (iv) “independence” (women having jobs are an important aspect of independence). These same variables however, were significant predictors of happiness.

Lastly, class and race were significantly associated with happiness-as-life-satisfaction as well as happiness-as-affect. These findings hold implications for interventions aimed at ensuring that women live flourishing lives. It further points to the importance of an intersectional approach in happiness related work.

The findings of this study clearly indicate that the questions related to happiness-as-affect and happiness-as-life satisfaction measures different things. Furthermore, the interaction between these variables with amongst other the gender related variables also differs. This holds implications for how happiness is defined in studies as well as how happiness is measured. I return to this important finding in the concluding chapter.

Chapter Seven: Women's experiences and perceptions of gender legislative reforms

7.1 Introduction

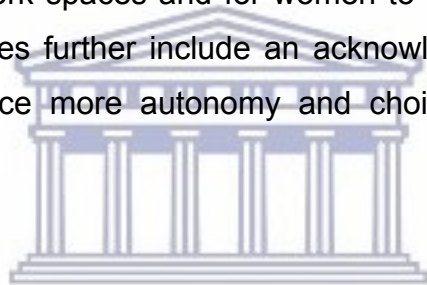
In this the first of three chapters where I present the qualitative findings of the study, I explore a group of South African women's reported subjective experiences and perceptions of the effectiveness of gender equality measures in contemporary South Africa. In this chapter, I specifically focus on what the gendered legislative changes have meant for them as women, as well as for other women. As indicated in Chapter Five, eleven individual interviews were conducted with key informants whom I considered gender experts, and who were either working in academia, NGOs, civil society organisations, teacher unions or Chapter 9 institutions. The focus group discussions (of which there were three) were conducted with laypersons who were recruited from a school (a group of teachers and a group of general workers/volunteers at a school) and from a women's group at a church. Thematic analysis was employed. In presenting the themes I have drawn on illustrative quotes to explore the different discursive themes emanating from the data⁶². In order to ensure the anonymity of participants, I have used pseudonyms to protect their identities.

This chapter is structured as follows: First, I report on what the gender-related legislative reforms have meant for women. It is evident from participants' narratives that the changes have been positive. Women also referred to legislative shortcomings, which are discussed in section 7.2.2. Next I report on the participants' perspectives on possible interventions to address the legislative challenges, before making concluding remarks.

⁶² Whilst not a key concern for qualitative research, it should be noted that the number of interviews and focus groups conducted were only 11 and 3 respectively, thus the data was not collected from a large number of women.

7.2 What have the legislative reforms meant for women?

This section explores what the changes in legislation, specifically legislation that is directed towards improving the lives of women, have meant for women. For the majority of women interviewed, the promulgation of legislation was viewed as positive and progressive. One overarching theme looks at the progress made post 1994 for women. This progress is explored in section 7.2.1. The key narratives articulated by participants include: (1) the acknowledgement of the role that women played in ensuring that women's rights were included in the political agenda of the democratic state; (2) recognition of women as full citizens of South Africa; (3) the possibilities that legislation offered for women to access various opportunities, including access to education, work spaces and for women to access rights set out in legislation. The narratives further include an acknowledgement that (4) post 1994, women experience more autonomy and choice. These themes are explored below.



7.2.1 Political recognition for women as an oppressed group

As acknowledged earlier, feminist and women's organisations, the academia, civil society and LGBTIQ+ organisations were all very active in ensuring that socio-economic rights were firmly recognised in the Constitution (Gouws, 2004a; Hassim, 2005b). The Women's National Coalition, as an umbrella organisation, was instrumental in canvassing the views of women from different political parties, civil society and NGOs in formulating a Women's Charter, which would contribute to the inclusion of women's rights in the Constitution. So too did many other formations organise on the basis of other injustices including sexual rights, labour rights and children's rights, amongst others, to ensure that all discriminations were addressed in the Constitution and that previously marginalised bodies received political recognition:

Hannah: I suppose I was thinking of feminists, feminists and people sort of aligned on the left who under the 80s and the 90s espoused what you might think of as unpopular causes. So for example Lesbian and Gay – the LGBTI and one of the things that interested me was that in 94 for example that community sprang forward to say that we need our rights protected in the constitution, there's no sort of backing down, same with environmental rights, same with children's rights, all these marginal communities have been pushed aside There was a strong pro-labour – you know the tripartite alliance, but everybody else got the message, you know, “women and children do not go first in the life boats here” you know it was what the – you know during the '80s the ANC actually said, there is only one struggle and it's racial. So, I think – I thought that – when I say “we”, I mean feminists who remember thinking “okay, we're not buying that anymore, finally that is over.”

Whilst women's organisations had always canvassed for the recognition of women's rights⁶³, the struggle against apartheid was predominantly one about race. Sexual and gender injustices, as well as other injustices, were secondary to the struggle for racial equality. However, the dawn of democracy presented an ideal opportunity to ensure that social injustices were addressed holistically. Hannah, in her narrative above, reflects on how gender and sexual issues, as intersected with race and class, could now be confronted in their own right, and were no longer marginalised to be addressed by women's organisations or LGBTQI+ organisations, but were part of the larger national policy discussions and frameworks.

The promulgation of legislation has also led to a more clear political recognition that women constitute a group of historically oppressed on the basis of gender and patriarchy, and require particular focus and redress. Nancy Fraser (2000) has contended that addressing issues of recognition, which refers to recognition of different identities (which is often a site of status subordination), is an important aspect in addressing gender injustices.

⁶³ The development of the Women's Charter in 1954, under the banner of the Federation of South African Women, is but one example of this organising.

One way in which any state gives recognition to different bodies is through citizenship. Citizenship refers to the relationship between individuals and the state, as well as between individuals, where access to rights and justice characterises this relationship (Gouws & Galgut, 2016). Citizenship is further characterised by the active participation of individuals in the affairs of the country. As Gouws and Galgut (2016) has noted, citizenship, from a feminist perspective, is about exclusion and inclusion, about who are considered as full citizens and who are excluded. Participants acknowledged the significance of the state's role – through the Constitution – in recognising women as full citizens of the country:

Zinzi: Err, I would think mm, the constitution as a whole, I mean, to be recognised as a woman is an important thing for any state to do that, we should not just take it for granted.

The institutionalisation of gender based injustices under apartheid and under colonialism – women were not recognised as full human beings, nor did they participate fully in the affairs of the state, even as white women, who were privileged under apartheid because of their whiteness – is what Fraser (1995, 2007a) has referred to as the injustices of misrecognition. In the extract below, Mandy indicates how the state has now addressed this misrecognition and recognised women, irrespective of their identity markers:

Mandy: Look I think that the changes obviously, you know, generally both legislatively and ideologically, in kind the post-apartheid era definitely had a significant impact on I suppose the conceptions of citizenship even at that very basic level. This consideration of who counts, or who is – on paper at least in terms of law and policy – recognized as a citizen, and I think there certainly – that had a massive impact on the fact that women are are recognized as claimants of full citizenship. That our dignity and our humanity and our rights to freedom, is articulated very clearly in law and policy, with the constitution as the under-pinner of that, and that on paper, regardless of what

our other identity markers are; our race, our class, our social status, that you know we have a right to citizenship and to full participation in society. So I think that's been – I think that's had a radical impact on many levels, psychologically I think it's had a very significant impact, the recognition of the humanity, the full humanity of women. So I think that apartheid absolutely didn't recognize, and more particularly for black women, but women across the board, I think, as a patriarchal system, hetero-patriarchal racist system, didn't recognize women's full humanity and equality. So, I think that psychologically that's been or psychosocially has been very significant.

It was not only through the state that black and poor women suffered misrecognition. The colonial project and apartheid were effective in ensuring that there was a hierarchy of race, class and gender, and this was reflected in relations amongst different races and classes. Freda, as an older woman who had been classified as coloured during apartheid, noted that coloured women were not able to participate as equals and were not accorded recognition on the basis of their race and gender. The extract below reflects the indignity and humiliation suffered by millions of black South African men and women, including those who identified as coloured. It clearly speaks to the oppression and discrimination women suffered, not only because they were women but also because they were black – what King (1997) would refer to as the multiple jeopardy of women:

Freda (FG Church Group): And even our acceptance as coloured women, we are now regarded as women and people treat us with more respect, overall. [...] That out there we are treated with respect, due to us. And that didn't happen 50 years ago.

For Mandy and Zinzi, who identify as lesbian and queer, recognition also implied the recognition of their sexuality, and the fact that they could gain equal status in, for example, marriage, as this was not possible prior to 1994.

This injustice was addressed in the Civil Union Act 17 of 2006, which regulates the solemnisation of same-sex marriages:

Mandy: Okay, I think most specifically for me as a feminist, lesbian identified woman I think changes around the recognition of my sexuality have had a radical impact on on me me, on my life, on my capacity to be politically engaged. I mean – and to – you know my experience of the social space, I think it's been very significant. So the fact that I am – you know my sexuality is legally recognized and protected has given me a lot of power to be able to express my sexuality in particular ways, both socially and politically. [...] So, I think, I suppose what I'm saying is that I – you know, ja so so the law has been most significant on a personal level for me in advancing, I suppose, the sphere in my life where I have experienced discrimination and that's in relation to my sexuality and not in relation to my race or my class because I'm positioned in places of privilege both in terms of class and race.

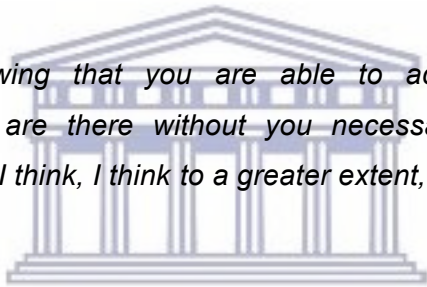
Zinzi: Mm, and of course, the lots of legislation that are linked to that outcomes that are being worked by different XXX of ngo's and pressure groups, etc. And of course there are numerous, even at a legislative level. Even things like marriage equality, etc, that has, that does affect women's lives. Mm, just thinking as a queer person, ok, something that we did not have prior to 1994, or actually prior to 2006, mm to be able to imagine, that one can have, can also the right to full citizenship through marriage, as a woman, is also an important thing.

Under apartheid race, class and gender were predominantly used as instruments of the apartheid state to divide and marginalise groups of people. However, people were also discriminated against on the basis of their sexualities, marital status and ethnicity, amongst others. The apartheid state machinery was deployed to ensure that groups of people, on the basis of their group identities, were not able to participate equally with their peers. Through the repeal of legislation and the promulgation of new legislation, the state,

after 1994, attempted to address the social and economic injustices suffered by the majority of South Africans, giving political recognition to people who had been oppressed on the basis of race, class, gender, sexualities, etc.

7.2.2 Increased access to opportunities

For many of the participants, the changes in legislation have led to an increase in access to opportunities that were not available to women before 1994, which heralded the transition to a democratic state. These opportunities were seen as varying from job opportunities to opportunities for development and growth:



Kefilwe: But knowing that you are able to access things, there are opportunities that are there without you necessarily being discriminated against, or all that. I think, I think to a greater extent, ja.

This discourse was supported by Amy, who when asked what gender equality means to her said it was about access to opportunities as well as resources, that women are not the same as men but that they have access to resources that will allow them to fulfill their potential. Participants supported the discourse that post 1994, many opportunities were opened up for women in particular:

Jean (FG Church Group): Can I say something? From the, a Christian point of view, as a woman, women were former years and especially before 1994, they were not easily accepted, as to become a minister or to go to the theological schools. And now, since after 1994, it didn't happen immediately, there were rare cases before but err the doors had opened wider for women especially to become ministers in the church.

Sam (FG Teachers): I think, well in my opinion, with regards to job opportunities, okay, equality has been set, if not very practically, but on paper, you know that we have companies, they are obligated to have a percentage, an equal percentage of management positions as well, you know so there is that kind of equality. Because before I mean we know that it was mostly males that spearheaded management positions and now there needs to be equality with regards to that.

Post 1994, more and more women have entered the paid labour market. The above extracts reflect the opening up of socio-economic opportunities for all women, but especially for black and coloured women post 1994. However, based on statistics for 2014, we see that only 50.6% of the female population are in the labour force, as compared to 63.9% of men, within the age category 15–64 years (Statistics South Africa, 2014). Thus, while employment opportunities may have opened up, a large number of women are still unemployed. This unequal uptake in the formal job market was acknowledged in the focus group with the teachers, with a participant noting that equality is in place on paper but perhaps not practically. Here, as will be shown later on as well, it appears as if the changes have not been felt in the daily lives of women, whilst they do exist in legislation and policy.

Access to opportunities or the progress that women have made could not always be ascribed to gender only. The key informants' as well as the other women's experiences clearly reflect their conceptual understanding and awareness that the passing of the gender equality legislation was not solely about gender redress. Gender equality legislation took into account the intersection of their multiple identities and positionalities, and acknowledges that racial discrimination could not be addressed in isolation of gender, class and sexual discrimination, amongst others. As outlined in Chapter Two, feminists, including Crenshaw (1989, 1991) and King (1997) have argued for an intersectional framework, which takes women's multiple axes of subordination into account. In the extracts below, Palesa and Mandy

recognise the intersection of their different identities and where this intersection have possibly led to them benefitting. Labour legislation has taken an intersectional approach, as legislation addresses not only discrimination on the basis of race but also on the basis of gender, as seen in the Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998:

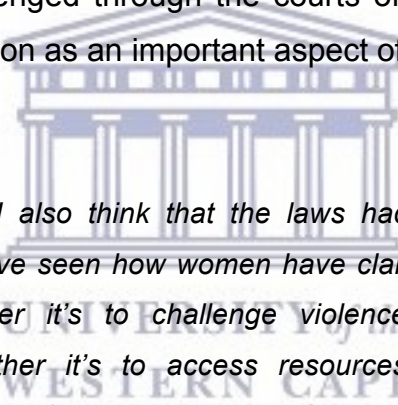
Palesa: Err, you know, err I would not look at the gender changes in gender specifically per se but more in terms of just the transformative moments in our country as a moment that began to open its doors to women of colour, to women, you know, who are professional to enter into terrains from which they were excluded in the past. So in this instance, I would say there is both you know, the consciousness about gender, because now as you know, the policies require that there is a certain number of representation of women in you know, positions of control and in positions of leadership and as well as the general atmosphere that have, that has opened up the space for people of colour, So it is a combination of the gender, the focus on err progress on the level of gender representation but also at the level of representation of people of colour. So the benefit has come for me on of both those ends and it's hard to divide to say it's the gender dynamic or it's just the openness that has occurred as a result of the new policies that we introduced after 1994.

Mandy: I mean I think the first point that comes up for me I suppose is that gender equality does not live in isolation of other form of equality at all, it operates at the intersection, you know all of the stuff, of other forms of being in the world. So to assess the extent to which gender equality leads to happiness or fulfilment or – without looking at how it interacts with how people are positioned racially in a society, economically in a society, sexually in a society, almost for me feels very, very narrow.

In my discussion with Amy she alluded to the intersection of gender and race, but in a different way to how Mandy and Palesa above have spoken about it. Amy indicated that in her work place, she has had a number of achievements

but recognised that she has been privileged as a white women, whereas many other women (notably black women) have not had the privileges that whiteness gave her.

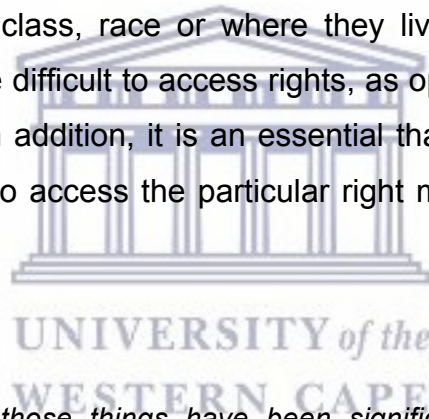
Many of the participants noted that their rights have been legislated and guaranteed in law. The majority of women now have access to various rights, which they did not have prior to 1994, including the right to vote, the right to education, reproductive rights, etc. Some of the participants noted that they now also have recourse through law if they are discriminated against, albeit on the basis of their gender or race. Again, the inclusion of these rights in various pieces of legislation acknowledges and addresses injustices inflicted on women in the past. Structural injustices that women faced and continue to face today can be challenged through the courts of law. This is in line with Fraser's view of recognition as an important aspect of justice:



Mandy: And then I also think that the laws had very particular structural effects, I mean we've seen how women have claimed their rights, using law and policy, whether it's to challenge violence, domestic or in all its permutations, whether it's to access resources, whether it's to access housing, I'm thinking of, you know, Irene Grootboom, the bigger cases, you know people going to courts to seek protection orders. So people actually using the law across the board to some degree in order to assert the claim on our rights, I think we've seen – I mean we can debate of course; is it enough? Has the law been democratically exercised; in the sense that all women can exercise it equally? Absolutely not. But I think that it's had a gross effect on women as a class, the fact that there's this recognition in law, and the fact that the law and its institutions have created possibilities for the exercise of rights, and the affirmation of rights and the protection and the advancement of rights. I think it's had a radical impact for women, for the body politic more broadly. Inequitable impact, I'm talking now bird's eye view, but a very significant one, even, ja...

Hannah: Uh, no, that's the short answer, what we do have however is something we've never had before, and that is we have a knight in shining armour that we can send out to slay the dragon of gender inequality and that is the constitution. So we have absolutely not achieved gender equality but when the push comes to the shove, if a situation was – if there was a situation of extreme – an extreme gender injustice – let me put it that way, and there was time in the civil society and NGO support, one could go to the constitutional court and one would win and that makes me feel optimistic and happy. The notion that we have this instrument now [laughs]

Legislating rights is not the only step, but certainly an important step in ensuring that discrimination is eliminated. Not all women may be able to access these rights easily. Some women may find it more difficult to access these rights based on class, race or where they live i.e. poor, black rural women may find it more difficult to access rights, as opposed to white women living in urban areas. In addition, it is an essential that rights are legislated, even though the need to access the particular right might not be necessary, as expressed by Zinzi:



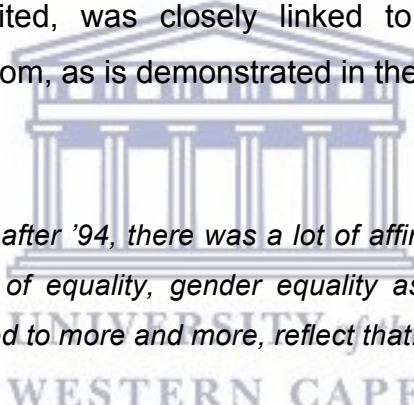
Zinzi: Err, err, so those things have been significant for me. But on the everyday, the other things that I have mentioned, like you know, issues around marriage equality like adoption rights, I have not accessed them and have not had the need to access.

In the conversations above, participants' accounts reflect their perceptions of the opening up of spaces, across gender, race and class, to different opportunities. This has been facilitated by the state, in some instances through the passing of legislation which has opened up spaces such as economic opportunities, educational opportunities, etc. The increase in educational opportunities has certainly reportedly improved participants' ability to move into the formal economy. The steps taken by the state in such instances, have been to address what Fraser has called the injustices of

maldistribution. Addressing issues of economic redistribution is an essential dimension of addressing gender inequalities. Economic redistribution is further an important aid or means to ensuring that women are able to pursue effectively other rights or choices that are available to them and which are essential for well-being.

7.2.3 The freedom to choose

Legislatively and theoretically, women now have the freedom to exercise choice. Enshrining a range of socio-economic rights in the Constitution and other pieces of legislation, meant that women now, legislatively, have the potential to make choices. The ability to choose for oneself, and for one's choices not to be limited, was closely linked to participants' sense of independence and freedom, as is demonstrated in the extracts below:



Susan: Well, I think after '94, there was a lot of affirmation of women's choice and autonomy and of equality, gender equality as a concept. And for me, legislation has started to more and more, reflect that.

Hannah: Oh, I think some of it is hypothetical and some of it is not. Hypothetically, I remember thinking, for the first time I feel legally free to get married should I choose to do so. Because for the first time I would not be voluntarily assuming the position of a legal minor, and by then for all sorts of personal reasons I knew that I – well mainly because I knew I couldn't have children, I had more or less decided that this was extremely unlikely. But I still remember that sense of – because I had always decided that under apartheid I would boycott the institution of marriage for all sorts of reasons. And the fact that legislation dictated to me who I got married to, as well as the fact that to guarantee any kind of financial or legal autonomy I needed to take off complex contracts to safeguard my financial legal independence. So the – I remember thinking well now I could get married because I could marry whoever I want to, I would no longer have the state presuming to tell me whom I could and could

not marry and I would no longer be risking losing important elements of economic and legislative equality. I mean for example, my tax status wouldn't change, that was one thing.

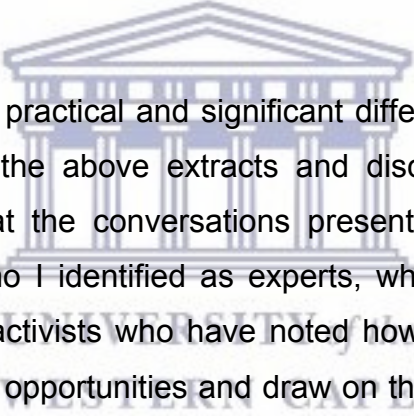
Sam (FG Teachers): And I think that over the years females have become more independent, if you look back then they were really dependent on their husbands and on the men to do things, now they get to do things, they can look after themselves, which is a good thing, you want to be independent.

Choice, and choice which is not limited, is closely associated with freedom. It is only once women have the freedom, and amongst it the freedom to choose, that women have the latitude to achieve what they desire. Sen (1999, 2009) has argued that freedom is essential in ensuring that individuals are able to advance their capabilities. As discussed in Chapter Two, these capabilities include: life; bodily health; bodily integrity; senses, imagination and thought; emotions; practical reason; affiliation; other species; play; and control over one's environment (Nussbaum 1999, 2003). Whilst the ability to choose was predominately discussed as a positive element, there was recognition in at least two of the interviews, that the choices available could also have negative outcomes, as seen in Grace and Susan's narratives below. These negative outcomes should however not detract from one's ability to be able to or have the freedom to make choices. However, often other factors, such as access to resources, need to be in place for the choices that one makes to be effectively supported, as will be discussed later:

Grace: Mm, you know because that is a reality, you know so the auntie in the farm will know all her rights and everything, and then will make that choice, or the woman who's filed for an interdict will make that choice, but sometimes the situation that follows, there's that temporary happiness, that I've been able to use the system, to push back and do it, but the actually material condition deteriorates because of that choice. Does that make sense?

Grace: So, the aunty in the farm will make the decision that I am going to walk away, I'm doing this, fighting eviction, but being evicted and having to be forced to live under a bridge in Worcester in a dry end of the bed, and then it's flood time and everything gets flooded, you know.

Susan: Ja or or also that it makes, that that knowledge doesn't change your life. The fact that you can lay a charge against your husband doesn't mean that you are going to make use of that because your life doesn't enable, there has been no transformation of your real life circumstances, so you do. He still has access to you, he can still kill you, women are killed every day around us, we have the highest intimate femicide rate ever recorded. The, you know the evidence is not there [laugh] that legislation will actually impact on their lives in a positive way.



Does legislation make a practical and significant difference in the day to day lives of women? From the above extracts and discussion, yes. However, when we look closely at the conversations presented above, it has been mostly those women who I identified as experts, who are either working in academia or NGOs as activists who have noted how they, in their *personal* lives, are able to access opportunities and draw on the legislative framework, if called upon to do so. The experts have indicated that it may be difficult for 'ordinary' women to fully access their rights or access legislation. As they have further argued, women do not have equal access to rights, services, etc. as guaranteed in legislation, due to their complex and intertwined positioning on the basis of race, class, geopolitical location and sexuality, amongst others. I would argue that the legislation has not been 'felt' in the lived experiences of the women in the focus group at the school with the teachers and community women. It is noteworthy to reflect on the progress that they have identified, although this progress is conditional and contextual, in that it is shaped by the different material and geopolitical contexts in which different women live.

Ally (FG Community women): Like in those times before 1994 women were not even seen as leaders in the community, but now women can stand up and fight for what – because there is – there is laws no, the equity, but those times it was nothing, but now – and only that aspect, where it's legal-wise, you can say that things have changed for me.

Many participants noted that today they have the freedom of choice which was not there prior to 1994. Freedom of choice was predominantly seen as positive. However, they recognised that whilst they do have freedom of choice, it is sometimes not possible to exercise this choice based on the obstacles that they face due to poverty, race, geopolitical location, etc. The inability to exercise this choice due to resources, amongst others, would hinder women from achieving that which they value. They would thus be impeded in both their capabilities as well as their functionings. In the context of impeded capabilities and functionings, their lives have thus not changed in any significant way.



7.3 Legislative shortcomings and challenges

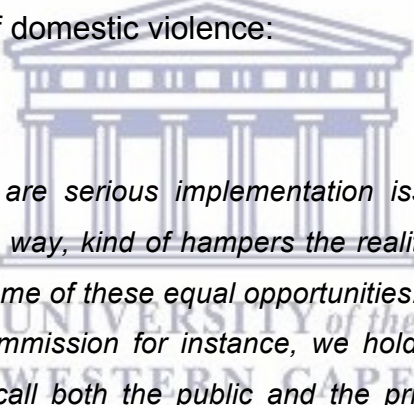
Participants raised numerous shortcomings in legislation and challenges that they experienced in their daily lives. These narratives will be discussed under the following themes: (1) implementation challenges, which raises some of the problems with the implementation of legislation; (2) women's multiple roles and responsibilities, which hinders women's full participation in leadership roles; (3) the disjuncture between rights and the daily realities of women; and (4) the view that changes in legislation has meant very little to the majority of women.

Whilst many participants acknowledged the progress that has been made with the passing of legislation, numerous shortcomings were also expressed. As Hannah succinctly described these shortcomings:

Hannah: [...] But I have always described South Africa's constitution as being a bit like a list of New Year's resolutions [laughter] and Pumla Dineo Gqola has described it as aspirational [laughter] and so immediately you have the shortfall between the constitutional principles, their translation into legislation, and even the translation into legislation falls short

7.3.1 Perceived challenges with the implementation of legislation

As has been demonstrated in Chapter Four, several problems with the implementation of legislation have plagued the effectiveness of legislation, and have detracted from the intended outcomes thereof. Implementation challenges were raised by a number of participants. These challenges range from companies being unable to meet employment equity targets to the police failing to act in matters of domestic violence:



Kefilwe: But there are serious implementation issues that we have as a country. Which in a way, kind of hampers the reality of really seeing women being able to get some of these equal opportunities. You look at employment, I mean, as the Commission for instance, we hold transformation hearings, where we kind of call both the public and the private sector to come and appear before us and we then interrogate them specifically on you know, the employment equity act, you know, more from the work, work perspective. Employment Equity Act erm, we look at their sexual harassment policies and all that, and what is in place and all that and in ensuring that you are upskilling women and all that. And when you look at specifically within the private sector, you still find that women are nowhere near decision making err err, you know, positions. So it means as much as we may have employment equity, may have a transformation agenda that we've put out there, it has not really trickled down to an extent that we see women then occupying these leadership positions. These positions, these decision making positions. And erm, erm, when you look into into that, many, we we interrogate the statistics; you find that it's still men that are up there in these positions. They try and come and say, no, you now, we can't find women, especially these

one's from engineering and everywhere else. Errm, we can't find women and what have you.

Florence: On the one hand there's been a suggestion that we need to educate people about the laws, like you know that it hasn't made enough of an impact because people are not educated, but I think from my experience in working on domestic violence that people know a lot about protection orders. I mean in the first place they know it exists, so I think that has made a difference, I mean the whole problem around domestic violence legislation is the implementation, you know like; are the police following through, what they're meant to do, you know because of course police are individual people with their own attitudes about gender and violence.

It is evident that numerous laws have been enacted to ensure socio-economic rights for all. However, the enactment of legislation is certainly not a sufficient measure on its own to bring about transformation. From the above experiences and perceptions of participants, structural injustices persist. Gender inequalities are deeply embedded in societies, and institutions such as the police and other work places have not changed. Gender inequalities are thus reproduced through the practices in these institutions. In order for change to be transformative, the introduction of legislation should go hand in hand with behavioural as well as attitudinal change. If not, legislation will be implemented half-heartedly and will not have the desired impact.

Some participants also referred to the challenges experienced in accessing rights, which is linked to some extent with the challenges raised with the implementation of legislation. I have reflected on some of these challenges in section 7.2.3. As discussed, women face difficulty accessing these rights depending on their class, race and sexual orientation. Women, pending their position in society, thus have unequal access to these rights. Some women, notably white, middle or upper class women would be able to access rights more easily than poor, black, queer women:

Mandy: Well I think in the sense that, you know, women are not only women, they are also very specifically raced, classed and sexualized, and the extent to which women are raced, classed and sexualized often impacts the extent to which they can exercise rights, so I think it's more difficult for a woman who's vilified because of her sexuality; a lesbian, queer, trans woman, to assert rights than it is for a hetero-feminine woman. I think for black women there are kind of racialized, structural impediments that also make the exercise of rights or the realization of rights much more difficult. If you look at how, you know, kind of racialized inequalities are so structurally imbedded in the way that society operates. And that obviously has an effect on the extent to which rights can be realized or experienced. And I think probably most powerfully are issues of class, so if people are – if women are literally excluded from the formal economy, already there's a massive barrier to the extent to which, you know, their rights to equality and dignity, freedom, livelihood, basic protection by the state can be advanced. So, in that sense I suppose I'm saying there's an inequitable impact of our legal and policy framework of gender equality on women depending on where they are situated socially and economically. I think that has a massive impact. That's not to say that poor women or or black queers aren't using the law, I mean of course they are using the law, you know, so I think they just – there are contradictions. You know, there are very serious structural impediments to gender equality that the law can't deal with on its own.

7.3.2 Women's multiple roles and responsibilities

Injustices in the economy can be observed in how the economy values what has been called productive and reproductive work. As have been discussed in earlier chapters, reproductive work, which is overwhelmingly done by women, is unpaid and under-valued. The importance of reproductive work is not acknowledged in neoliberal economies, where increasingly state responsibilities for care have shifted to women. Reproductive work has the potential to constrict women's participation in the formal economy. Kefilwe and Sandra argued that women's responsibilities in the household and family have often hindered them and other women in accessing opportunities or fully

accessing their rights. Women often carry the burden of these additional responsibilities in the household, which leads to tension between roles that they can and do occupy in the public sphere and with those accorded to them in the private sphere. As unpacked earlier, Connell (2009) and Connell and Pearse (2015) have argued that gender inequalities are organised through gender relations. One domain of gender relation, the sexual division of labour, is seen as a key site of unequal gender relations, as expressed by Kefilwe and Sandra below:

Kefilwe: A women has responsibilities at work yes, they have responsibilities as well at home and many a times you can see that some of these responsibilities at home, kind of hamper them from progressing in the formal workspace. If we, I'm going to be in a board, or if I'm going to agree to be in a board, if meetings of boards, I know that they come out at 12 midnight everyday and I have a child and people to look after at home, then then possibility is I'm going to have to make choices there and say, ok what's better? No, there is no way, I'd rather, you know, be at home errm, I'd rather not just be in a board, or in that high up position because then I will not be able, it's almost as you much choose, choose between family and work.

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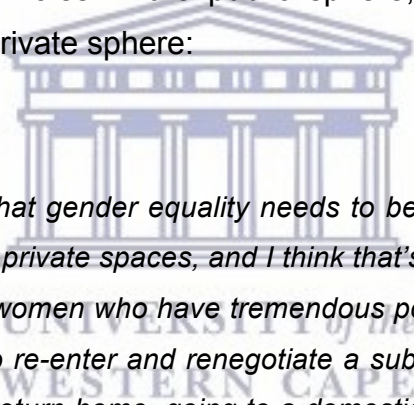
For Sandra, her position as a leader has caused strain and tension, and additional work for her in the household:

Because the roles that women are perceived to be doing, you're supposed to be a housewife, you're supposed to be a mother, yes we are – you're supposed to do chores at home, neh I wasn't here for 4 days and now I come back, I get it like that, because you're supposed to be doing that. And in a sense there's always this thing, you should be able to cope with both sides. We live in a hostile society that doesn't really value the input of women.

She expresses this tension between what is expected of her in her role as a woman, wife, mother and her desire to occupy a leadership position:

You've got to be a housewife, but you also want to be a leader.

Hannah also relayed a story, told to her by a friend, of a woman who held power in her position as a minister, yet was expected to fulfil the role of a dutiful daughter-in-law within her private life. The following narrative suggests that whilst there may have been transformation or progress in the public space, even women who hold positions of power in the public space, may not hold such power in the private sphere. Whilst there may be a shift in normative gender binary roles in the public sphere, there has not been a concomitant shift in the private sphere:



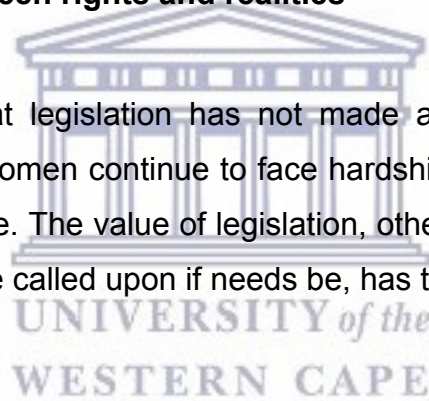
Hannah: I believe that gender equality needs to be robust in real; not just in public space, but in private spaces, and I think that's quite rare in this country. I've known a lot of women who have tremendous power and agency in public spaces and have to re-enter and renegotiate a subservient or very restricted spaces when they return home, going to a domestic space or intimate space, or even just – I mean even on certain stages within the domestic space. I will never forget years ago one of my closest friends was the legal adviser to a cabinet minister, a woman of tremendous power; and my friend once made this throwaway line, you know sort of; "well this weekend is going to be very quiet because my minister has decided that her in-laws are unhappy, she needs to spend a weekend being a makoti."

So whilst women have moved into positions of leadership and into paid employment in the public sphere, the responsibilities in the private sphere and tasks considered women's work in the household have not stopped nor shifted. Taking up the opportunities and spaces that have opened up to women post 1994 has thus meant that women have to work doubly hard, in a

context where this unseen work is often devalued and is not remunerated. A 2013 Statistics South Africa report, looking at the amount of household work done by employed men and women, reveals that by far, and across all race groups, women spend more time doing unpaid housework, caring for others and collecting water and fuel. Amongst women, black women spend far more time on these tasks (266 minutes per day), compared to coloured women (222 minutes per day), indian women (218 minutes per day) and white women (198 minutes per day) (Statistics South Africa, 2013). The question thus arises whether it is enough for the state to introduce legislation alone, as women, in effect, suffer when they take up these opportunities, as the care and household responsibilities are not shared equally within the household.

7.3.3 Disjuncture between rights and realities

Participants argued that legislation has not made a material difference to many women's lives. Women continue to face hardships, despite progressive legislation being in place. The value of legislation, other than providing a legal framework which can be called upon if needs be, has to be reflected on:



Florence: I think it's – again I'll come – I'll use this as probably an example running through, because of what I do, but I think it's the disjuncture between having progressive legislation that we're lauded for, you know, across the world. I think it's also because you know, of kind of, where we were and where we are, that's what's remarkable for people outside of South Africa. But, so it's the disjuncture between having that progressive legislation, and still that – if we talk about the daily reality of the lives of women in South Africa, okay beyond violence now, I mean the violence is the big issue, the levels of violence that women are subjected to is just unspeakable. But beyond the violence, I mean there's the structural violence, there's poverty that is formalized, right, it's mostly women. There's income inequality, that women get paid less than men, I mean in a sense it's global trends, but still, you know with our progressive legislation, we should be doing better on these things. There is – it's income inequality, it's poverty, it's just access to

resources, you know there's gender [in]equality, generally, like high levels of disparity in the workplace. So, I think those are the negatives, that, if you think about, you know, potentially a sense of empowerment for women, ideas about being able to access things that may have seemed inaccessible before, and then of course the difference that having the state on your side in terms of violence in a sense, can make in a relationship, those are advances, but if you think about these other things I mentioned: the high levels of inequality, poverty that is gendered, violence, income disparities, access to land, to resources, then it's – I mean I guess then the answer would be it hasn't made much difference, I would have to say, I'd be forced to say.

Susan: Well, I think after '94, there was a lot of affirmation of women's choice and autonomy and of equality, gender equality as a concept. And for me, legislation has started to more and more, reflect that. So the fact that abortion is available legislatively, that we criminalise marital rape and domestic violence that we have an equality court and a Commission for Gender Equality, we have institutions, I think that has a significant impact on our perceptions of gender equality at least. So even though in your daily life you might experience a lot of inequality you at least have an awareness that it shouldn't be so.

The disjuncture between legislation and women's lived realities was expressed by participants as being a limitation on their rights and as an infringement on women's freedom. Violence and the threat of violence is a reality in many women's lives in South Africa. As the data in Chapter Four shows, rates of sexual violence, including rape, are very high:

Grace: Yeah, for me I would say, because there's a sense of – you know, obviously there's others that yes, I'm very happy that I've got the right to freedom of movement, but I'm highly irritated that I can't get up at 4 o'clock and go and jog because I don't know – because I can't fulfil my right to freedom of movement because – because of the picture of the society and the society that we're living in. But at least there is the right.

Sandra: Yet on the other hand again speaking as ordinary women on the ground, although there's policies and there's been much improvement if we think – I'm just thinking of of of domestic violence for instance, the many rapes, the things, the harassment, the abuse that women go through, there's policies for that as well, but internally we're still struggling with that. There's just so much that men still perceive – although there's this legislation, it doesn't add to the fact you know until we as women can walk out there and be totally free of all this, I don't think we are free yet, I don't think we are there yet.

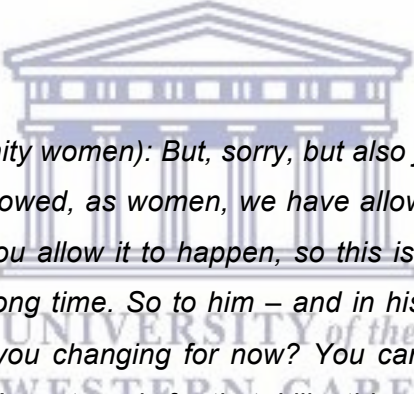
Grace and Sandra's observations are borne out by research, which indicates that femicide rates in South Africa, as discussed in Chapter Four, are one of the highest in the world, with research showing that a woman is killed by her intimate partner every eight hours in South Africa (Abrahams, et al., 2012). This despite South Africa having legislation such as the Domestic Violence Act in place. Threats of violence and actual violence limit women's capabilities – life; bodily health; bodily integrity; senses, imagination and thought; emotions; practical reason; affiliation; play; and control over one's environment – and thus their right to freedom, a fulfilled life and well-being.

Limitation on movement was also experienced in the private sphere, with one woman in the community focus group indicating that her husband had problems with her socialising with friends on her own. Her capability of affiliation to others was thus hampered by her husband:

Beth (FG Community women): And also some men aren't ready to accept the change, for instance what I'm going through at the moment, I've been married for 20 years, so we've been doing everything together for those 20 years. Now, I've met up with some old friends of mine, so now I'd like to go and have coffee with my girlfriend from way back when I was young, I'm not allowed to, it's a whole big thing [interruption]...“I don't understand why all of a sudden you want to go out now, why do you have to go, why can't we do it as a family?”

that's the kind of thing that right now is happening, so what – that's the thing I'm struggling with at the moment, they're not ready for change, not always.

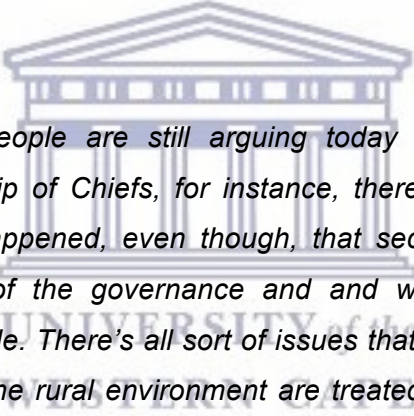
It is interesting to note how the response by a further respondent tends to reproduce a dominant blaming discourse, in which women are held responsible for violence (and gender other injustices) against them (Hearn et al., 2013; Suarez & Gadalla, 2010). The response by Megan further acknowledges that there may be a difference between older and younger women, single and married women in their experiences of gender equality. Read into Megan's narrative, is the perception that older, married women perpetuate behaviour that reproduces normative gender roles, whilst it is younger, single women who are able to exercise choice and disrupt normative gender roles:



Megan (FG Community women): But, sorry, but also just also on that point, it is because we have allowed, as women, we have allowed it. I always say things will only happen if you allow it to happen, so this is how she's been – this is how it's been for a long time. So to him – and in his mind it's also confusing; "what the heck are you changing for now? You can't just change this whole system on me now, I'm not ready for that, I like things the way they were." But I also say, you know, especially, I think in marriage, you should have, men and women, husband and wife, should have their own little down time. I don't think you can share each other's space 24/7, you need your own little thing as long as your wife, your partner is happy with or your husband is happy with what you're doing and where you're going, it has to be trust. Because now because they've had this thing for such a long time he's probably thinking, "Mm, how do I know she's really with her friend?" Because it's been so for 20 years, why in 21 years you want to change things? It doesn't – in a man's – I think men have tunnel vision, all they see is that and we see this whole kaleidoscope of colours and we know we can go out and we can be tempted, but we know there's a boundary. So, I think very often with gender equality we allow it. We perpetuate it all the time, we're saying you know it's okay, we don't mind being treated so badly. That's why I look at young women like her who stand up, I don't know – I hope you don't mind me saying a single mom – who stand up

and say you know what, there are two of us involved here, but I'm the bigger person, I'm the mommy, but I'll show you, I'm gonna be mommy and daddy. I admire young women who can – who can say you know what I'm gonna stand up for what I need to be, who I need to be. So, gender equality is just, it's neither here nor there, it's different in every aspect like it's different in a marriage but it's different for the single person or single mother or you know, yeah, it's just how it's different in the workplace as well.

Despite South Africa having a constitutional democracy, concern was raised by some participants about the seeming contradiction between the rights accorded through the constitution and the powers granted to traditional leaders. Women (and men's) constitutional rights are thus seen as being in conflict with traditional or cultural rights:



Palesa: I mean people are still arguing today with changes within the traditional leadership of Chiefs, for instance, there are problems there, the change has not happened, even though, that sector, is a sector that is a governance, part of the governance and and where, change should be visible, it's not visible. There's all sort of issues that are problematic, in terms of how women in the rural environment are treated. So, it's it's a challenge, you know, it's a challenge still but there have been gains. There are institutions that cannot avoid it that feels forced to to make the changes and to to have women as visible members of their institutions or organisations although you know, it is happening very slowly, but there has been. So I wouldn't say gender equality has been achieved. There is a consciousness about its importance but you know, I don't think it has necessarily been achieved.

Many participants noted that there have been many legislative changes which address gender inequalities. However, as reflected in the narratives above, there is a gap between what the legislation sets out and the actual lived experiences of women. Whilst the legislative changes may have attempted to

address inequalities, gender inequalities are deeply embedded in the social practices, gender relations and the very fabric of society and its institutions. Legislative change will thus not necessarily result in a change in gender relations, with gender injustices being reproduced and maintained in various institutions, through practices and in some cases, policies. It is thus not surprising that practices in institutions of traditional leaders have not shifted towards gender equality.

7.3.4 Changes have meant very little to the majority of women

Whilst most participants noted that legislation had brought about some degree of progress in the lives of women, a few participants noted that the legislation had no direct impact on the majority of women, that the legislation had symbolic significance only, and that the changes have meant very little in their material and day to day lived experiences.

This theme *Changes has meant very little* is closely related to the disjuncture between legislation and the lived realities of women's lives. Whilst women have the ability to use legislation, whether they actually do so was in question, given that there had not been any real changes in their daily circumstances:

Susan: [...]a or or also that it makes, that that knowledge doesn't change your life. The fact that you can lay a charge against your husband doesn't mean that you are going to make use of that because your life doesn't enable, there has been no transformation of your real life circumstances, so you do.

Whilst another participant indicated that the changes in legislation have meant little in her life, she did question whether some of the changes had happened in her life due to her being a woman, and thus that she benefitted as being

part of a collective – women – or whether it was due to the fact that she worked hard. Whilst saying that the changes had not meant much to her, in her reflection, she does acknowledge that she could have benefitted from changes in legislation. Zinzi's response reflects the complexity of what the changes in legislation have meant for women. On the one hand, they seemingly have not meant much, yet on the other hand, women can and have potentially benefitted from such changes. Zinzi's sentiment also belies the fact that hard work on its own is not enough, even in a democratic South Africa, to have brought about all the changes in her life, especially as a black woman:

Zinzi: What have the changes meant (laughter), what have the changes meant... very little actually. Very little really in reality. Of course, because I am a working person, so in terms of like, employment equity, so I do, I think that as a women, does benefit me, eerm. But I to be honest, but I am not sure if it benefits me because I am a woman or because I work as hard as anybody else who would have applied for the job. But ja, it does seem, it does seem, that now, there are possibilities that, as a woman, I could access any kind of employment and that is an important thing.

The sentiment that legislation has not had a direct impact on women (and men's lives) was further raised in the interview with the church group, as the exchange below shows:

Carmine: ... But you also said that in within the household, within the home, the man is still the head of the household. So has there been changes within the household then, following 1994? Or not only in the household but in relation to [Freda: socially] socially ja, in terms of social relations with men. Are men and women more equal now?

Jean (FG Church Women): I think they are more equal if I have to have to speak from a family point. If I can take my son and his wife. Whereas before, they are working together so beautifully and the one doesn't decide upon unless the other one knows about it. So yes, especially that pre-marriage

consultations had helped them a lot. To, not for him to look down upon. Because he grew up very strict. I was a very strict mother. And not to look down upon his wife. But to help her and to see her as equality, equal with him because they shared everything and err, decisions were made together and they laugh together, they go out together. It is not as if he sits on her head, which I appreciate as a woman that she is being treated as a woman in the home and not just to be err degraded.

Freda (FG Church women): But that is not as a result of legislation.

Jean (FG Church women): No, that is not as a result of legislation.

Freda (FG Church women): No No. But that is what you want?

Jean (FG Church women): No it is not a result of legislation. But it also helps err from a Christian point of view, to have that open consultation pre marriage consultation which is, which there isn't a law for it but err it is in the church constitution as such. We can include it in our constitution then. For these pre-marital consultations with an ordained minister or with an err goodness, our student who's here, she can also do it err because she it is her final year, so she is allowed, but she is allowed to perform anything except for marriage, because she hasn't got a marriage certificate, and for a woman she needs to get that to be recognized as a woman minister who can do that.

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Freda in the exchange above goes on and explains that the social relations in her household between herself and her husband were not as a result of any legislation passed:

Freda (FG Church Women): Sorry, I don't think that legislation impacted that much on gender between man and woman. Because it depends on how the woman behaves, how she bares herself. And throughout our marriage, I've been respected as a woman. It didn't require legislation for me.

Some of the participants in the community focus group further stated that changes meant little, as men still dominated in certain positions, and within

the household dynamics had not changed, as men still saw themselves as heads of the household and still held positions of power:

Ally (FG Community): Look I finished matric but I haven't [inaudible] and whatever but it just seems that still the men are dominating every aspect of it, so for me it's just – yes there's some changes there, women have more rights now that they can – avenues that they can go about, as far as the rights, I don't think they can change.

Freda (FG Church Group): Errm, basically that is all that I can think of at the moment. But errm, domestically, the man still thinks that he is the head of the house.

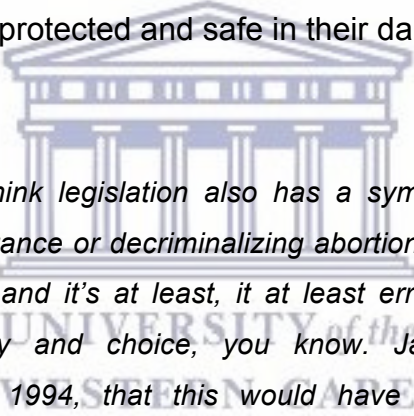
The data indicates that where participants observed that legislation did not have an impact, they nevertheless recognised how legislation could be useful and indirectly, has been significant. When participants spoke of legislation having minimal impact, they tended to indicate that the legislation had not resulted in any transformative changes in the lives of women. Notwithstanding, there was a strong sentiment that legislation could be used as a tool by women needing to access rights:

Susan: I think errm, legislation doesn't have a direct impact on women's lives but I think that it is a tool for them to use actively use to improve their lives.

Susan: Well, I I I guess I used the wrong terms. I'm not saying that it didn't have an impact, it did have an impact but it didn't transform, it didn't have the transformative impact that we were hoping for. Errm, change is very slow and incremental and it's been 20 years, and I think, or 20, it's been over 20 years, errm but I think we need to be err it has to come with the transformation of institutions. So lets take abortion for one thing, women, abortion is decriminalized and women should have access to abortions in the public

health system, but they don't. Because we didn't transform people's attitudes and believe systems in those institutions. Errm, we also didn't properly let women know that abortion is not illegal, that it's not, if you had to ask a lot of women whether they think abortion is legal or illegal they might very well tell you that it's not legal. Errm because they don't necessarily know. Mmm ja, so I guess it has had an impact but not as a radical an impact as we would have thought.

Susan, who works in a NGO, expressed the view that legislation has only had symbolic significance for women, and has not resulted in meaningful change for women. Whilst women (and men) were aware of their rights, they continued to face challenges including inequality, poverty, amongst others. Legislation was symbolic, as women knew that they are protected without them necessarily feeling protected and safe in their daily lives:



Susan: I think, I think legislation also has a symbolic effect, criminalizing marital rape for instance or decriminalizing abortion has a symbolic affect on women's positions and it's at least, it at least err emphasizes or reaffirms women's autonomy and choice, you know. Ja, but I think that our expectations after 1994, that this would have a big impact were not necessarily realised.

She goes further and states that:

Susan: I think because inequality and poverty still remains. So while we have improved the obvious things, we still haven't redistributed land, we still haven't significantly addressed inequality and economic inequalities. We haven't had any kind of radical transformation of those things.

From the above sentiments expressed by Susan, I would agree that women would have experienced the enactment of legislation very differently based on their social and geopolitical location. However, the perspective that legislation may only have had a symbolic effect is possibly overly negative, given that there have been numerous cases where inequalities have been challenged successfully before the courts. One such case was that of Irene Grootboom against the Government of South Africa. Irene Grootboom challenged the government for not providing adequate housing for the community in which she lived, and challenged the state's obligation under the Constitution which gives everyone the right to access adequate housing⁶⁴. Having said this, Susan's perspective is significant in that she sees legislation as not having a transformative impact on the lives of women. A sentiment that was echoed by other participants in the study.

Palesa introduced the notion of *irrationality* in relation to the progress that has been made with advancing women's rights. Here she refers to the irrationality of politicians and people in power, who are going against the very mandate of what they are meant to be doing i.e supporting and implementing legislation, and seem to go against what is contained in policies and often treat, amongst others, Chapter 9 institutions badly:

Palesa: So my err response to your question is that there is a disconnect or what I call an irrationality in terms of the progress we have made at the same time the responses by people in positions of power who are not taking the lead in actually enacting some of these policies that we have that that protect our society.

Palesa: Making the connection between the policy and what happens on the ground. They are the ones, ok, we, I think on the one hand that the politicians who can take the lead but the civil society, which is actually taking the lead in

⁶⁴ See Government of the Republic of South Africa and others VS Grootboom and others at <http://www.saflii.org/za/cases/ZACC/2000/19.html> for the court judgement.

reminding the society that here we have these rights. But I find that the voices are sort of, you know, the voices that kind of are calling out from the deep. There aren't these voices that are more visible that should be supporting these calls for greater attention to be paid to these policies and to these laws that we have in place. That is not happening. That's this kind of for me the irrationality because there isn't a connect between what the laws say, what the policies say and what the leaders, the politicians are actually doing.

Palesa goes further to argue that politicians sometimes also work against the very policies that have been introduced, and the women that are meant to be protected by legislation:

What we have witnessed when we've had these major events for instance of violations against women is that the voices of women in politics have tended to be, you know, to resist engaging publically with what these policies mean. I give you one very recent example of women protesting when Jacob Zuma was giving you know, his speech. They were protesting for them, it was kind of a sort of like a protest in commemoration of what happened to Kwezi as a woman who was violated, whatever the courts findings were around that. She was violated by a man that she trusted. They stood there, four women, their right to protest, and and pronouncing on women's rights. What do politicians do? They protect Jacob Zuma. This is disrespectful, and so on. None of them were saying, this is the right of these women based on our Constitution. So there was a renegeing of their responsibility to be the first ones to step up and say, "Yes of course, this is the right of women." So they didn't protect, they were not present to protect women and these women were not necessarily themselves violated but at that moment when they stood up to say "this is what our Constitution, the rights and the freedom that our Constitution bestows on us" but if that action is not supported by people who are law makers themselves then that right and freedom sort of falls flat. So what I mean is the stepping up, the need for them to step up and to be visible when they are needed to be visible.

Palesa's comments touch on a number of salient points. Politicians, at least in the perception of these participants, appear to have either lost touch with the challenges that grassroots communities are facing, or they choose to ignore flagrantly the plight of grassroots struggles. Furthermore, politicians are not held sufficiently accountable by civil society, their political parties and their constituencies for their actions or lack of actions. So whilst politicians might have passed particular legislation that is meant to guarantee certain rights, they often show no consideration for the rights of citizens, and transgress the very legislation and policies that they ought to uphold. This was the view that was expressed by some participants and is, to some extent, evident through recent judgements made in the Constitutional Court⁶⁵.

7.4 Towards transformative gender changes

At the outset, I should point out that not many participants spoke about what measures can be introduced to ensure that the gender legislative reforms introduced are more transformative. Whilst this was not a substantial theme, a number of participants indicated that specific interventions were required to ensure that legislative measures actually made a difference in the lives of women, and that they could indeed benefit from the progress achieved thus far. They were cognisant of the fact that legislation alone would not bring about transformative change. As noted by Kefilwe, structural interventions are required to bring about real change:

Kefilwe: When you look at issues around flexi hours, these are things that we also look at, to say, do you have flexi hours, because, yes, we know that, err as women, you may have a baby at some point, and then err sometimes,

⁶⁵ One such example is the Black Sash Trust vs the Minister of Social Development and Others. The Black Sash brought an application before the Constitutional Court to ensure that grant beneficiaries are able to access social grants and that the South Africa Social Security Agency fulfills its constitutional obligations to provide social assistance to beneficiaries.

those considerations from the home, also affect the decision making of whether to take up certain positions or even be in a formal place of work. So those are some of the things that we also look at. Do you have like, do you help, for instance, as an employer, to ensure that perhaps there is a crèche and an aftercare for kids or something that maybe you can contribute to or maybe that can be there within your workspace and what have you. In which case then it takes away the other burden of thinking, Oh my God, what is going to happen to this child, and all that, so, when you when you look at those when you look at them, you think that they are softer, smaller issues, but I think they are very impactful. Because those are things that should also be in place to actually ensure that what is now put in the legislation actually happens.

As discussed in Chapter Four, many gender equality measures have been introduced to ensure that women are able to participate equally with their peers. Notwithstanding, as discussed earlier in this chapter, women continue to bear the burden of care and household work. Women taking up the gender equality opportunities thus continue to be burdened with work in the household that is not recognised. Workplaces can thus play an important role in acknowledging the care work that women are often responsible for, by introducing practical measures to enable women to take up the gender equality measures in the workplace. As seen from Kefilwe's narrative, creating a gender sensitive workplace will ensure that women are able to take up leadership positions, whilst ensuring that the care responsibilities are also taken care of. The introduction of such practical measures ought not to be the sole responsibility of workplaces. The state, through measures such as subsidised, public care facilities, which could include early childhood centres, state care for the aged, incentives and legislated paternity leave, amongst others, will remove some of the burden from women, and provide them the space to take up gender equality opportunities and not restrict them to normative gender roles or burden them with multiple roles. However, neoliberal states which prioritise economic growth, the accumulation of wealth, monetary and fiscal prudence also advocate for the privatisation of welfare services, which thrusts care responsibilities onto women.

Participants further noted that legislation alone was not sufficient to ensure that women take up and excel in leadership positions, and that an enabling environment was needed. An enabling environment meant that women needed to be given the necessary skills and support to be able to fulfill and access certain opportunities. Participants were clear that opportunities should not only be given to women because legislation requires it and to ensure that certain numeric targets with regards to employment equity were met, as this would not result in the necessary transformation of institutions or be of real benefit to the women employed in these positions:

Megan (FG Community women): [...] however, even with our – the situation in our country, you should be – it is hopeless giving somebody – if she’s a male and she’s got a managerial position, don’t [put] me in there just because you have to because I’m a woman. I have to be trained to do that job, because it’s pointless putting me there and I don’t know what’s going on; I’m only there because I’m a woman and they need a woman there[...] think our emotions are also a good thing when we look at the whole gender thing.

Cindy (FG Teachers): I would say no, in a sense, from what I’ve seen, most companies hire females because they’re forced to, they need a score. So it’s like – okay from where my husband is working, when I look at how they do things, they check; it’s time for this now, maybe they need to sell this portion of the company to a certain company, and the other company will say “but you don’t meet the BEE score; we need females, we need certain black people.” And you will see them actually creating posts. I remember there was actually this lady, she didn’t even have a title, but they said come [...]

7.5 Conclusion

It is evident from the data that participants saw overarching legislative progress introduced in policies. Apartheid, as a patriarchal, racialised system did not recognise black persons and women’s full humanity. This changed

legislatively with the transition to a democratic state, starting with the recognition of numerous socio-economic rights in the Constitution.

Participants were of the opinion that the recognition of women's humanity was an important milestone – they were now recognised as citizens irrespective of their social identity and material location. The misrecognition that women suffered under apartheid due to race, class, sexual orientation was addressed legislatively by the state, through the recognition of women as active citizens in the Constitution. As noted elsewhere, recognition is given to women's socio-economic and human rights in the Bill of Rights, and specifically section 9⁶⁶ and section 20⁶⁷. Black, coloured and white participants attested to the recognition they receive from the state. The state thus no longer renders women invisible. As was seen in the focus group with coloured women in the church group, this recognition extends beyond the state, to recognition by others. Whilst this is a qualitative finding and not generalisable, the inference that I make is that people of colour, and in particular women of colour, are now accepted and respected by others, others who had not respected or acknowledged them before - namely white people.

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A democratic South Africa saw spaces that were previously closed under apartheid opening up. The majority of South Africans can now access educational opportunities and job opportunities. Many of the participants acknowledged that opportunities in the job market were now available to them, made possible through the enactment of legislation. Whilst participants viewed the enactment of legislation as progress, they noted that these opportunities and rights existed on paper. Evidently, some of the participants in the focus groups (teachers and community members), who mostly identified as working class, felt that this progress and opportunities had not become part of their realities. The experts interviewed further supported this notion that not all women are able to access these opportunities and rights equally.

⁶⁶ Section 9 deals with Equality matters.

⁶⁷ Section 20 deals with Citizenship.

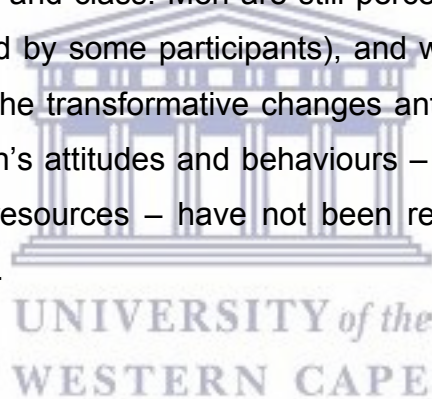
Choice emerged as an important theme for participants, and signified the freedom that women have gained post 1994. Many participants, across race and class, expressed the view that women could now exercise their choice over a number of aspects of their lives. This included the choice to get married, get divorced and generally to be more independent from (male) partners. Notwithstanding, participants also recognised that their choices were often limited and conditional. Whilst legislation is in place for women, for example, to choose to get a protection order against a violent partner, this choice can leave you vulnerable and destitute. Women are thus not able to fully exercise choice, often due to lack of resources or lack of the necessary support from family or the state (such as the police and the courts).

In spite of the progressive changes that participants reported, they noted many shortcomings with legislation. Notably, challenges were still seen in the implementation of legislation, including the Domestic Violence Act, where the sentiment was that police officers were not fulfilling their responsibilities. Florence made reference to the Domestic Violence Act, when she noted that police officers had particular ideas and attitudes about gender based violence and often did not respond to matters of domestic violence, as they were required to by the Act. Failure on the part of police to act amounts to secondary victimisation for the many women who attempt to lay charges of domestic violence at police stations or when trying to get protection orders enforced. Participants argued that the blasé attitudes of police officers were not confined to a small number of individuals but was often widespread and amounted to institutional violence against women.

As seen from the viewpoints expressed by participants, women's reproductive work has often hampered women taking up work opportunities in the formal economy. Where women are employed in the formal economy, it has not led to their reproductive workload lessening. Primarily, women remain responsible for reproductive work. This places additional burden and strain on women and impacts on their well-being. Within the capability approach, it impacts on the

capability of health, as the stress and burdens associated with additional work could lead to associated health challenges. Additionally, as Sandra indicated, her leadership position had caused tension within her marriage, thus I would argue, affecting her well-being as well as her affiliation capability. The stress, tensions and burdens, brought on by the additional reproductive work, further impact on women's ability to enjoy leisure time, laughter and play (another of Nussbaum's capabilities).

The expectation for many of the participants was that the changes in legislation and a democratic South Africa would bring about social and economic changes for them. However, this has not materialised as expected. The conditions of women have not changed drastically. Women still face inequalities across race and class. Men are still perceived as being heads of the household (as noted by some participants), and women continue to face poverty and violence. The transformative changes anticipated in the social – in gender relations, men's attitudes and behaviours – and economic spheres – including access to resources – have not been realised for some of the participants in the study.



In conclusion, in order for women to be able to do and be who they want to be, and lead the lives that they value, numerous interventions are required. Some of the participants alluded to this when they said that women need to have the necessary skills and education to take up certain positions and opportunities. In addition, institutional impediments need to be addressed. Certainly, social norms, behaviour and attitudes need to be challenged and disrupted, especially when they actively work against the employment of women, as seen in the views expressed by Palesa, when she refers to the behaviour of persons in positions of power.

Notwithstanding the opportunities that have opened up and women's ability to exercise choice, albeit limited, and despite structural institutional challenges, a

further 'enabler' is required, given that even though opportunities are available, not everybody would be able to make the most of these opportunities. Robeyns (2008) has referred to these 'enablers' as conversion factors. The extent to which women can benefit from the opportunities are dependent on how easily the conversion to capabilities can be made. As identified in Chapter Two, three conversion factors can be identified, namely social⁶⁸, environmental⁶⁹ and personal⁷⁰. The role of the state and others, and their relation to the conversion factors, needs to be explored in order to ensure that what participants have viewed as progress, but only on paper, is realised in their daily lives. I will return to this in the concluding chapter.

Legislation that ensures that the rights of all are protected is imperative if we are to see positive changes in the lives of women. However, legislation alone will not guarantee that women are treated fairly and equally. Discrimination on the basis of gender, race, sexual orientation, class, may be legislated against, but this does not mean that it will not occur. In the views presented in this chapter, participants call into question whether 'real' transformation has taken place. They question whether gender relations and structures in a patriarchal society have been transformed. From their discussions, it is clear that this transformation, for them, has not taken place adequately enough.

This chapter has foregrounded the advancements and challenges that participants voiced in relation to the laws enacted in South Africa. It lays the basis for the discussion on gender equality and what gender equality has meant in the lives of women, which is the focus of the next chapter.

⁶⁸ Robeyns (2008) looks at social institutions (e.g. political system, educational system, family), social norms (including gender norms, cultural norms), traditions and behaviours of others in society (racism, sexism, homophobia)

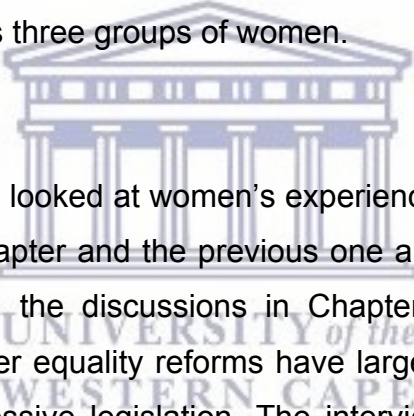
⁶⁹ The environmental factors refer to matters such as extreme weather conditions that could affect one's shelter and security (Robeyns, 2008).

⁷⁰ Personal factors refer to one's mental and physical state (Robeyns, 2008).

Chapter Eight: Women's experiences and perceptions of gender equality

8.1 Introduction

The ideal of gender equality is legislated in South Africa. This ideal finds expression in the Constitution, as well as different pieces of legislation and international agreements that South Africa is signatory to, as discussed in Chapter Four. As discussed in Chapter One, as part of the larger aim of the study, the objectives include exploring women's understandings and experiences of gender equality, in addition to women's subjective experiences and perceptions of the effectiveness of gender equality measures. This chapter addresses these objectives in relation to the narratives collected from key informants as well as three groups of women.



In the previous chapter, I looked at women's experiences of gender legislative reforms. The present chapter and the previous one are integrally linked, with this chapter building on the discussions in Chapter Seven. As noted in previous chapters, gender equality reforms have largely been driven through the enactment of progressive legislation. The interviews addressed matters related to both legislation and gender equality as two separate notions, and I am able to report on women's experiences and perceptions of legislative reform and gender equality as stand-alones. Having said this, there was considerable overlap between participants' experiences and perceptions of gendered legislative reforms and gender equality. Participants' perceptions and experiences of gender equality are discussed under three broad themes, namely: (i) constructions of gender equality; (ii) impediments to achieving gender equality; and (iii) attainment of gender equality. I will conclude the chapter by drawing together some of the salient findings.

8.2 Constructions of gender equality

8.2.1 The meaning of gender equality

Stemming from the overall objectives of the study, I asked participants in the individual interviews, as well as in the focus groups, what gender equality means to them. Different constructions of gender equality emerged from the key informants as well as from the women in the focus groups. Participants refrained from providing definitions of gender equality, which was surprising given that gender experts were amongst those interviewed. Participants however expressed themselves succinctly on what gender equality means to them. For participants, it is evident that the notion of gender equality is complex and nuanced. Gender equality is not one specific notion or idea. Participants held multiple views about what gender equality is. These views included the following, which I unpack in more detail below: gender equality as the absence of discrimination, violence free societies, the sharing of responsibilities, fulfilling one's potential, having the same rights and opportunities afforded to men and women, having voice and agency, transformation, redress and access to resources, acknowledging intersectionality and gender equality is navigated.

8.2.1.1 Absence of discrimination

A key narrative in elaborating on what gender equality means to participants was that of a society in which prejudice and discrimination are absent. Some participants, including Grace and Thato spoke about gender equality as the absence of discrimination:

Grace: [...] maybe I should just say it, you know it's about where there is no discrimination or prejudice against you being – you being – and I'm saying this in totally heteronormative way, as a female-sexed body, mm. You know

there is no prejudice or discrimination in that, may it be from – and that means not just at the legislative level.

Thato (FG Teachers): That society cannot prescribe that you are female, you can only do that or the male can only do that.

The Constitution of South Africa is unapologetic about its stance on discrimination. Section 9 of the Constitution clearly stipulates that the state, or any person, may not unfairly discriminate against another person, whether directly or indirectly, on the basis of gender, race, class, sexual orientation, amongst others. Given South Africa's history of colonialism and apartheid, it is not surprising that Grace and Thato expressed the view that gender equality means that they are not discriminated against in any way based on their identities or social locations.

Discrimination is clearly addressed in the legislative framework of South Africa, and it can be argued that it is adequately addressed. Legislating against discrimination however does not mean that there is no discrimination against individuals or groupings in society. In post-apartheid South Africa, we continue to see displays of gender discrimination and discrimination on the basis of other social identities. Legislation is clearly insufficient on its own to ensure that such discriminations do not occur, as articulated by Grace as well.

The views expressed by the participants assume that equality is created by attitudes. It seems to suggest that we will have equality if we address the prejudices that individuals hold that lead to discriminatory practices and actions. This understanding of equality fails to recognise the structural embeddedness of inequality in the fabric of society. It further gives credence to neoliberal individual ideologies, which shape the entire global and local gender equality project (Walby, 2009). Using a capabilities lens, I argue that

legislating against discrimination is an important tool, albeit but one tool to address gender inequalities. However, we also need to look at the extent women (and men) are able to utilise spaces (both material and symbolic) that the 'freedom' has created, and to convert resources into capabilities and functionings. Participants made specific reference to addressing the social aspects (namely those of discriminatory behaviours and attitudes) of society, which would lead to conducive environments for the conversion of resources to capabilities. According to Robeyns (2008), the social aspects refer social institutions (e.g. political system, educational system, family), social norms (including gender norms, cultural norms), traditions and behaviours of others in society (racism, sexism, homophobia). Within the capability framework, it is thus evident that one should not only be addressing the behaviours of others, but that unjust social norms and social institutions should be challenged and disrupted.



8.2.1.2 Free from violence

Violence in societies is a clear indicator of unequal societies. So too is gender-based violence an indication of gender inequality in a society. A number of participants spoke about violence and how violence relates to gender (in)equality. For Hannah in particular, gender equality represents living a life free from violence:

Hannah: The main thing is I would like to feel safe, really I would like to walk down the street anywhere I would like, and there would be public transport. I would like to be able to know that I was safe in my home, and in my private and domestic and intimate spaces and then I was safe when I was traversing public spaces as well. That's what it would mean to me and it is a source of great grief to me that I have never felt that and it's unlikely that I'm going to do so in my life, that's what it would really mean.

Participants, including Florence and Kefilwe, further articulated the view that gender inequalities are fundamentally linked to violence, and that gender inequality leads to violence. Gender equality for Hannah, Kefilwe and Florence implies a life free from violence. Numerous scholars have argued that violence is a result of gender inequalities (Bhana, Nzimakwe, Nzimakwe, 2011; Connell & Pearse, 2015; Nussbaum, 2005; Walby, 1990, 2009). Not only violence but also threats of violence curtail the movement of women and girls, and impacts significantly on their freedom. Violence further impacts on a number of capabilities, and thus impacts on what women are able to be and do. These capabilities were discussed in detail in Chapter Two.

Participants equate lives free from violence with gender equality. Given this, what are the possibilities that these participants (and others) would regard gender equality as part of their lived reality? I would argue that they would not see gender equality as a lived reality. South Africa is rife with violence. The statistics reported on in Chapter Four speaks to this. Not only is violence rife, but gender based violence is particularly prevalent in South African societies. Violence, as discussed in Chapter Seven, also means that women cannot fulfil certain capabilities, lead gender equal lives nor participate equally with their peers.

8.2.1.3 Sharing of responsibilities

Gender inequality is often very evident in the allocation of household and care responsibilities within families. As noted by Connell (2009) and Walby (1990, 2009) the family is often a site where gender inequality and patriarchy are at play and are reproduced. Many participants viewed gender equality as the sharing of responsibilities in the household. This became a salient feature in the focus group with the teachers:

Thato (FG teachers): My husband cooks [laughter] he does the washing, so yeah that is sort – make me relax, you know and I'm not afraid to wash the car or to do gardening or clean the yard, I must just relax, it's not like I'm the girl or I'm the lady in the house so I must clean, I must cook, there's no specific role we both just do whatever needs to be done.

In the interview with Amy, she expressed the view that she and her husband shared tasks equally and enjoy an equal relationship. Notwithstanding, when their children were small, she was the primary caregiver. Thato and Amy both spoke about the equal sharing of household and childcare responsibilities with their partners. Whilst men are involved in household and care work, research points to women doing more household work and care work than men. Men's involvement in care work has further not matched women's involvement in paid employment (Kato-Wallace, Barker, Eads & Levtov, 2014). Research undertaken by Statistics South Africa (2013) provides evidence that employed women do more unpaid housework than men. This would include care work, as well as provision of water and energy sources where there are none within the household. So whilst Thato and Amy have spoken about the shifting and sharing of responsibilities in the household, evidence suggests that there has not been an overwhelming shift in household responsibilities in the social order.

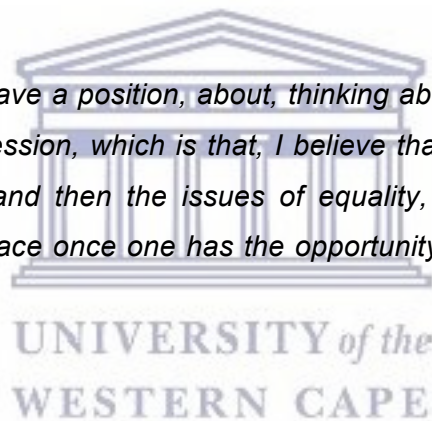
The sharing of responsibilities certainly has an impact on a number of capabilities (see Nussbaum 1999, 2003) of women, which would include play, senses, imagination and thought and control over one's environment. Having the overwhelming majority of household responsibilities would impact on women's ability to have leisure time, laugh and play and thus ultimately, their well-being. Furthermore, household responsibilities could interfere with women's ability to engage in formal employment on an equal basis with their peers outside the home, and therefore the ability to own property, which relates to the capability of having control over one's environment. The state thus becomes an important role-player in the provision of care. However,

neoliberal states, which prioritises economic growth, are hesitant to afford greater responsibilities for care work to the state, opting instead that this burden be carried by individuals and more specifically women, impacting on women's capabilities and well-being.

8.2.1.4 Realising of potential

Amy indicated that whilst women are not the same as men, they should have access to various opportunities in order to realise their potential. Palesa, in her interview, consistently returned to the notion of 'being the best that one can be', in other words, fulfilling her potential:

Palesa: [...] I do have a position, about, thinking about myself in terms of my work and my profession, which is that, I believe that, one has to be the best that one can be and then the issues of equality, including equality, racial equality fall into place once one has the opportunity to become the best that one can be.



The capability approach has as its core the concern for what people are able to do and to be. 'Being the best that one can be' and fulfilling one's potential thus reflects the language and the centrality of the argument of Sen (1992, 1995, 1999) and Nussbaum (1999, 2003). Both Palesa and Amy equate this fulfilling their potential to having gender equality, and one can argue gender justice. The discourse of Palesa and Amy was closely linked to having access to opportunities and not being thwarted in reaching their potential in any way. An important concern for me is whether discourse of 'being the best that one can be' is one that reflects the broader neoliberal discourse which places value on individual growth and the importance of individual action, taking away responsibility from the state to ensure that measures are in place for all to have access to opportunities, etc. which would enable individual growth and fulfilling one's potential.

For some participants, gender equality implies that women and men have the same rights and same opportunities. In the extracts below, Kefilwe and Megan express their views on women and men having access to opportunities. In the case of Megan, she notes that she had an opportunity to in a sport traditionally associated with men:

Megan (FG Community women): Okay this is just for me, this is a field, I coach junior softball, boys and girls, I was the only female coach, it was tough in the beginning getting in there with all – a male dominated world, because most of the – because almost all men were coaches – all the coaches were men, but it was up to me to prove that I'm capable of the job. [...] So, for me, and then it was – even like it is now, where gender equality is a bit easier. But so for me that would be my example gender equality, where I was accepted not on "oh yeah, she's good,, she's a girl" I was accepted because I could do the job as good as – if not better than – any man who was coaching.

Again, the above views express gender views which do not challenge the social order, but rather are about ensuring that women and men are equally balanced in terms of numbers. A different view is expressed by Candice who spoke about gender equity. Gender equity recognises that men and women should be treated differently and different measures set in place to ensure that men and women achieve legal, social and political equivalence. This is an important debate that has been dominant in discussions amongst feminists, activists and at a policy level.

8.2.1.5 Voice and agency

For participants, voice and agency emerged as an important issue when speaking about gender equality. The theme of voice and agency is closely related to the theme of recognition – being acknowledged as a woman, as a citizen, as a human being – which was discussed in Chapter Seven. Voice

and agency for participants refer to women being able to voice their opinion, having a say in things, being heard, having an opportunity for dialogue, being taken seriously (given that they have the support of legislation and the constitution):

Hannah: I have never voted, I boycotted elections and the majority of the country's population was excluded from the electoral process. And the electoral process you know translates into the legislative process. So, again this euphoric sense of "oh now I can contribute, now I have a voice, now we can all get together and we can – we can give input." So that was a lovely feeling; that made me very happy

Kelly (FG teachers): ..like I said my mother was – I was almost – she was really dominant in the house and then I would see other parents where the male is more dominant and I would freak out because I couldn't – my father is very soft-spoken and my mom is like wah-ha-ha-ha, all over you. And then I didn't like that really, but I – it was what I was used to.... And my mother can't be, "hy kan nie op jou kop sit nie"⁷¹, that's her words, [inaudible] you must open your mouth and you say and this is what it is. [...]I'm not as dominant as my mother, but there's just that I always try to make sure – even at school I tell my kids, you need to be assertive, because there's a difference between being assertive and being arrogant. You can get your point across, you can say no and whatever, but in a good way.

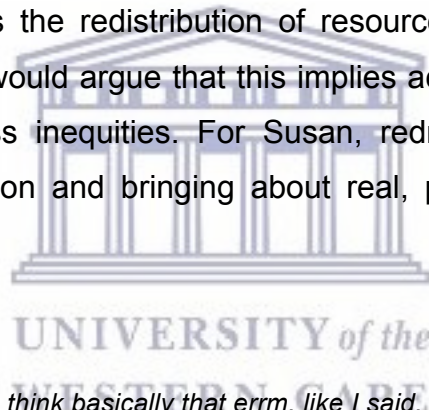
The above expressions of agency are linked to what Amartya Sen has termed agency freedom. Agency freedom refers to the ability of the individual to do and pursue those goals and values that she thinks is important for her to achieve (Sen, 1995). Agency and voice are important aspects of freedom and thus gender equality, as narrated by the participants above. Agency is however more than just being heard. It is about being able to make decisions and the process of decision making, which also entails the ability to negotiate

⁷¹ Kelly spoke in Afrikaans. A literal translation means that he cannot sit on your head, meaning he cannot dominate you.

decisions (Kabeer, 1999). Kelly reflects on the importance of being able to negotiate and also the ability to say NO, which touches on the choices that you are able to make. Agency is thus integrally linked to one's ability to exercise choice.

8.2.1.6 Redress and access to resources

Transformation requires that *redress* takes place. As some of the participants indicated, the notion of gender equality, as well as the enactment of progressive gender legislation, does not go far enough to ensure that real change has occurred in the lives of women. Susan has argued that we should go beyond gender equality to ensuring that injustices are addressed through redress, which includes the redistribution of resources (including economic resources and land). I would argue that this implies active action being taken by the state to address inequities. For Susan, redress was an important element of transformation and bringing about real, practical change in the lives of women:



Susan: Well, I think I think basically that erm, like I said, there needs to be a redress, that people need to have less and women need to have more [CR: Of?] and we should do so unapologetically. More money, more autonomy, more independence, more power, more power in decision making, more space, err even physical space, I think we need to we need to shake things up a little bit more significantly. [...]But that just means that, it just seems, it just means the err the status quo, those women are not transform transformative women, they, it doesn't significantly change the lives of poor women because those women already started with resources and they just continued on that track. Errm, ja, so I don't see, I think gender equality is not the err, not necessary what we should be aspiring to.

Redress is associated with disruption in one form or another. For Susan redress meant that some people needed to have less, and that this would be

associated with discomfort for the individual having to give up something, albeit power or resources, etc.:

Susan: Well, I think that for for for to be able to have a more egalitarian society or to be able to have resources better distributed so that everybody has something, some people need to have less.

As discussed elsewhere in this dissertation, redress forms an important part of addressing gender injustices, as posited by Fraser, where she focusses on the redistribution of resources. However redress can also be viewed as the disruption of gender norms, gender relations and the social order. Redress, in this instance, is required as a radical shifting of gender and power relations, as well as the redistribution of resources. This economic redress, as well as redress pertaining to social aspects, are clearly lacking in South Africa with minimum achievements in either of these spheres.

Some participants referred to access to resources, such as financial resources and educational resources, as important elements of gender equality. The availability of resources for women is linked to women's ability to make choices and to be independent. Kabeer (1999) speaks about access to resources as related to choice. She identifies three interrelated dimensions which influence one's ability to exercise choice: resources (which acts as a pre-condition to be able to choose), agency (which is the process of decision-making), and achievement (which looks at the outcome). I would thus argue that all three are necessary for a person, in this instance, women to be able to exercise choice.

Grace: But I think it's also to – for me the gender equity part of the access to resources, and the distribution of resources. You know yes there's the equality bit, which is the big social, legal systematic – but you know to have

those choices, and to be able to do what I said earlier around making choices, around all of that, I think we should – the gender equity – we should also be focusing on – which – you can make choices and take – make choices and all of that, but at the end of the day if you – it needs to be – you know if you're still economically dependent, you know it's that access to all those resources. You know, to education, you know to money, to houses, you know yes women will have – feel very happy because I've said today that I'm divorcing him, you know blah, blah, blah, but tomorrow we're back, the man comes back into the house because there's – you know you need that extra income or whatever.

In the extract above, Grace alludes to both agency as well as the importance of resources to be able to make a choice. For one's choices to be effective, there needs to be an enabling environment or favourable conditions in place. In the narrative above, the conditions under which a choice was made were not conducive to a satisfactory outcome. In other words, as expressed in the extract of Grace above, the woman who later had to accept her husband back after divorce, had no 'real' choice in this matter, having lacked the resources to facilitate the choice that she was making.



Redress, as spoken about by some participants, as well as access to resources form an important part to what Fraser (2005, 2007a) has referred to as redistribution. With redistribution, Fraser refers to the importance of the economic redistribution of goods and resources, which are crucial aspects of addressing social injustices. It is only when women have access to resources, amongst other, that they are able to participate equally with men. This refers to what Fraser has called participatory parity.

Beth, in the community focus group relayed that both she and her husband are employed. She indicated that she can spend her money in whichever way she pleases, which is mostly to repay household debt. However, her husband, she reports, does not give her access to his earnings:

Beth: He won't give me money and say this is –

Ally: For you

Beth: For bread or whatever, so in that way we aren't equal. I don't need to fear him for anything but where money is concerned, no way, so he doesn't consider the two of us to be on equal level where finances are concerned. Yet, I'm the one who – from my salary – pays most of the debt that we have, so if it's expected that he'll give me of his to – I need my cigarettes, I'm a smoker, my grandpas and stuff, I need money for that as well, but I'm spending mine on the debt that we have for both us and the kids.

The lack of participatory parity, as well as maldistribution of resources are clearly expressed in the quotes above. Beth and her husband do not participate equally when it comes to decisions on how money is spent. She acknowledges that she and her husband are not equal in respect of finances. Control over resources, as expressed in Beth's expression above, is one of the domains in which male power in the household is located (Sideris, 2004).

8.2.1.7 Gender equality is navigated

Key informants were acutely aware that women have made significant advancements that with regards to gender equality. Participants stated that despite gains made in the public sphere, within the private, the gains brought about by gender equality still needed to be navigated:

Sandra: The values that men believe to be predominantly in the society, like you can't negotiate sometimes with men because they perceive that's a no, no area for you. And in a sense some women believe that, we don't negotiate – like for instance, equal opportunities, I have my own car and my husband has his own car, yet I don't just take the key and get into the car, whereas he will take the key and go.[...] So patriarchy – you know our societies, they're groomed, they have been, I don't know, I find it very frustrating being opened up to all these ideas of equality now, I find it very frustrating speaking

speaking to women![...] You're saying – we are saying equal opportunities, equal things that you will be able to do, but yet I can't make this decision on my own, I have to, I have to somehow still submit to the role or this thing that has been imposed that you've got to be subordinate all the time. It's here at the back of your mind; yes you stand up there and you speak and you do these things, but there's a lot of tension.

In the interviews, participants referred to the social and gender relations that they continue to navigate in the household and in society more broadly. Thus, despite Sandra having a leadership role in her organisation, she still feels that she has to negotiate her movements or negotiate her decisions with her husband. She makes the link with patriarchy and puts this need to confer down to patriarchy and the subordinate position that women are subjected to in the private space. That gender has to be negotiated in relationships touches on what Connell (2009) has referred to as the power dimension in understanding gender relations. Susan's experiences clearly show that her gender relations differ in what Walby (1990) has referred to as at the micro (individual, family), meso (community) and macro (state, global) levels. However, the ability that they have to negotiate should not only be viewed as a negative, as is perhaps reflected in the extract above. That gender is navigated could also be an indication of the agency that is exercised and negotiated within the household. I contend that it would be a greater concern if there were no agency on the part of Susan, and she did not have the ability to negotiate and have her voice heard.

As seen in this section, participants assigned different meanings to gender equality. These meanings included the absence of discrimination, living a life free from violence, the sharing of responsibilities (mainly in the household), the realisation of one's potential, gender equality as the expression of voice and agency, redress (and thus transformation) as an element of gender equality, and the navigation of gender equality. The reader will recall that I had not provided a definition of gender equality to participants. Participants

thus articulated the above as indication of what gender equality means to them. In the discussion section later in this chapter, I return to the meanings ascribed to gender equality and analyse this in light of the state's definition and implementation of gender equality measures.

8.2.2 Rejection of the notion of gender equality

Whilst not widespread, a number of the key informants raised a strong objection to the current orthodoxies around the concept of gender equality. They highlight the problematic that gender equality is premised on the idea that women need to be equal to men, who are set as the markers or best possible markers, and women thus need to strive to be like men. Some of the key informants interviewed rejected this notion of gender equality, as espoused primarily by liberal feminists who see gender equality as premised on men and women having equal rights, including equal access to education and job opportunities, but who tend to ignore the structural and material power relations in which patriarchal power is embedded.

As can be seen in the exchange below, Zinzi was emphatic that she rejects the notion of gender equality, since it continues, as she argues, to reproduce an essentialist gender binarism hinging around unquestionable masculinity and femininity. The extract below illustrates Zinzi's rejection of the societal view that male bodies are more valuable than female bodies. This is reflected both in her silences and sighs following my question, as well as the emphasis that she places on the rejection of the notion that we need gender equality:

CR: What does gender equality mean to you?

Z: sigh

Silence

CR: And maybe whilst you are thinking about that, if you can share some of your experiences or examples of what gender equality symbolizes in your life.

Z: You know it is a very difficult thing for me to think about. To be honest, I really don't know what it means. [Laugh].

CR: Ok

Z: I know what it is promoted as, you know, in terms of public discourse, but for me, that thing is not enough. Whatever it is that I am being fed by society, is not enough. I do understand that, you know, we've had a society where certain bodies were designed to be less than others and because of, and and that certain people were given opportunities or opportunities taken from them because of the way that their bodies look and how their bodies are presumed to function in society. I reject that notion. I completely reject that notion. I acknowledge that it exists. But for me, it is not something] that [laugh] I prescribe to. That is why it is difficult for me to talk about gender equality because, to be honest, I don't want to be equal to anybody.

CR: So, so when you say that..

Z: Yes, I have gendered, I shouldn't, but my position in society shouldn't be made to be, you know, I shouldn't [sigh] be seen to be as another, I should be seen to be who I am?

CR: Ok, so tell me a bit more, when you say that you reject what is put out there as gender equality. Mm, maybe you can just explain or tell me a bit more about what it is that you see being put out there and what it is that you reject and rather strive for something else.

Z: So, so... my understanding is that the whole premise or the whole notion is premised on the idea that, you know, that because of, well it does not even acknowledge that patriarchy exists but it wants you to believe that patriarchy exists. That because of patriarchy then, women or female bodies have had less opportunities in various things in society and in life than male bodies or men. And therefore to bring, to bring that sense of balance, we've had to put things in place to make sure that women are as good as men or have as many opportunities as men. So, my rejection of that notion is from the basis of the point that that notion automatically assumes that men are the best marker of human beings in society.

The need for gender transformation as opposed to gender reforms is further demonstrated in the discourse of Palesa and Mandy, which speaks to a rejection of the liberal feminist notion that women simply need equality with men, rather than addressing larger intersectional inequalities and power inequalities between male and female bodies. The narratives of Zinzi above, as well as that of Palesa and Mandy below, are a reflection of the debates in feminism where some feminists pursue gender equality as reform to existing policies, legislation, etc., as opposed to a call for gender equality measures which disrupt, challenge and transform gender relations and the social order:

Palesa: You know, err, gender equality is a, it's a question that for me always evokes questions about errm, questions about whether our goal is to be equal to men. And I struggle with answering this question because for me the question is always about how can you be the best that you can be.

Mandy: You know it's not a term – it's a term that I have some discomfort with because I have a discomfort to some extent with the notion of equal because for me it always begs the question; "equal to what and equal to whom?" So, somehow embedded in the idea of equality is the standard, an unquestionable standard. And I wonder; well in relation to what is that standard set? Gender equality as a notion sometimes does. And it stops us from naming women specifically, and it stops us from talking about the ways in which inequality takes shape. So it's – you know I have some ambivalence.

Zinzi, Palesa and Mandy criticise the notion of gender equality, as has been defined by a dominant strand of feminism in much of the global response to gender equality policy and practice. Global and local responses to gender justice have largely been premised on liberal notions of gender balance and gender machineries. Gender balance refers to the attainment of equality or parity in numbers between men and women throughout society, in institutions of the state, in the home (where responsibilities should be equally shared for caring and other household tasks), equal access to job opportunities,

positions of leadership and authority, as well as political power, amongst others (Lorber, 2010). Emphasis is thus placed on the number of women and men that are represented in different arenas. Such dominant frameworks of gender justice, which we see built into the fabric of state and intra-state responses to gender equality, are obsessed with the counting of numbers and the introduction of control and regulatory measures, which does little to disrupt and shift gender and power relations in society, both locally and globally. What such hegemonic accounts and visions of gender equality fail to do is to challenge patriarchy, existing norms and the normative male model, which is premised on and serves to reproduce intersectional gender power relations and power inequalities (Squires, 1999), which is what Zinzi, Palesa and Mandy question. The social order thus remains intact and unchallenged.

Susan further notes that gender equality is used as an overarching concept and that it does not clearly specify the injustices experienced by particular groups, namely black women and girls, as well as black men and boys. She draws particular attention to the lack of intersectionality in the dominant perspectives on gender equality. Intersectionality, as a framework of analysis, emerged predominantly as a tool to give recognition to differences amongst women. Susan further contends that women (and men) are not homogenous groups and, therefore, their heterogeneity should be taken cognisance of, especially when measures of redress are being implemented:

Susan: Ja, err, the other thing is that not all women are the same so we need to know who we are talking about and maybe that's also been a problem of the past is that we have not been absolutely clear about what we mean err gender equality, it's a we need to be more specific. We need to be talking about black women and girls, rural women and girls, we need to be, we need to be talking about trans people errm, gay and lesbian women, we need to be talking, we need to be talking about black men and boys who die at an astonishing rate because of violence, gangsterism all of those all of those kind of things and gender equality doesn't properly encompass any of those

things. Err so it sort of disguises the real problem. It implies that all we have to do is just to get everybody sort of on par you know, a little bit on par, that 50%. It doesn't actually mean any significant change for people.

Susan expresses the concerns that postcolonial and intersectional feminists have raised with regard to euro-centric, western and northern liberal and radical feminist views of gender equality, and points to how such frameworks have been deployed in global gender justice efforts. As elaborated in Chapter Two, postcolonial and intersectional feminists, such as Mohanty, Crenshaw, hooks and Hill Collins, have argued that women are not homogenous and much of western feminism has failed to take women's multiple identities into account, which sees women oppressed on the basis of gender, race, class, geopolitical locations, amongst others.

A further concern raised by participants was the manner in which the concept of gender equality has diluted addressing women's issues. Mandy contended that men, and men in positions of power, as seen in her example, use the language of gender equality to mobilise and to reinforce patriarchy:

Mandy: So we're no longer talking about women's rights, we're talking about gender equality and there's a sort of a false equivalence there around the equality of men and the equality of women, that's imbedded in this term gender equality. So, somehow we're not talking about women's rights, the idea that women are disadvantaged and therefore their rights need to be asserted, we're talking about gender equality. And men are mobilizing this notion of gender equality to also advance patriarchy, I mean you know, Jacob Zuma's famous statement, I think it was last year's 16 days of activism campaign where he spoke about how men must be involved in gender equality campaigns, not because they rape and abuse but because, you know, they are equal partners in the leadership against gender inequality. And I'm thinking well, hang on a second here, so that statement is devoid of the realities that women are mostly affected by gender inequality, you know,

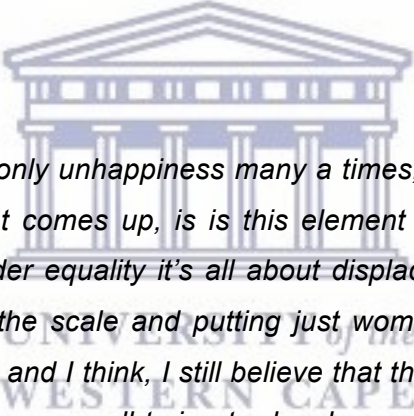
and it's used to now advance the rights of men. So I'm just saying there's a sort of an invisible trick that gender equality as a notion sometimes does. And it stops us from naming women specifically, and it stops us from talking about the ways in which inequality takes shape. So it's – you know I have some ambivalence.

Gender equality, as espoused by mainstream feminists, has mostly been regarded as reformist or affirmative. As Lorber (2010) has argued, the implication of gender reformist strategies i.e. gender balancing, is that men can participate positively in either bringing about change in the gender balance, or can position themselves against or retaliate against bringing about gender balance. This is precisely what Mandy is arguing against. She further argues that notion of gender equality can be used against women to maintain and reproduce patriarchy and patriciarchal relations. Holter (2011, p. 95), on the other hand asserts that even in a country such as Norway, which is known for its gender equality policies involving men and women, “men supporting gender equality in practice as well as in attitude may be a minority, but today they are no longer a small or unusual minority; and on the attitude level, they have majority support”. Men most resistant to further gender equality reforms in Norway have mostly been those with low education, and who feel threatened by immigration matters, amongst others (Holter, 2011). Supported by neoliberal discourses, they have argued that gender equality legislation and reforms are no longer needed and that “families should be free to choose” (Holter, 2011, p. 93), which essentially means that inequalities will remain. Failure to engage men in gender equality discourses would thus in essence mean that there is very little change in attitudes and practices.

Is it Mandy's intention that men should not be engaged at all in the struggle against gender equality? Or is it that men should be engaged, not to ensure gender balance but to disrupt the gender order and gender binaries. I would argue that it is the latter. However, Connell (2011) raises a different argument to Mandy's above. Connell notes that not engaging and naming men in the

discussions about gender equality pushes men's interests, problems and diversities outside of the gender framework and into the conservative arena of men's rights, resulting in a backlash against feminists and any arguments calling for gender justice.

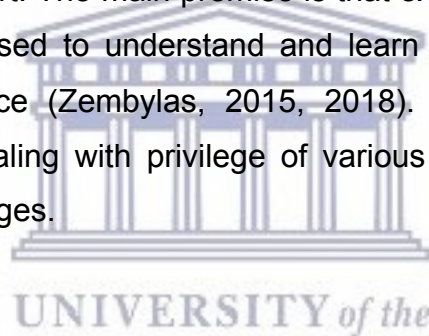
Some men have resisted the gender equality discourse, which they have argued is about displacing them, taking something away from them, including power (Carlson & Rendall, 2013; Clowes, 2013; Holter, 2014; Ratele, 2014). This kind of view holds that gender equality is a zero sum game – men lose out where women gain (Holter, 2014). This displacing of men or 'men losing out' discourse, is reflected in the conversation with Kefilwe, where she notes that men view gender equality as an attempt to displace men, which she argues, it is not:



Kefilwe: I think the only unhappiness many a times, when people think about gender equality that comes up, is is this element that people think that err when you say gender equality it's all about displacing men or the other the other gender from the scale and putting just women and and nothing else. That's that's where, and I think, I still believe that there is a misunderstanding in terms of of what we are all trying to do when say gender equality. I think, and by the way, for me it's still it's still something that gets manifested by patriarchy [CR: ja] errm the kind of patriarchal thinking, so, as far as I'm concerned

For Kefilwe, who incidentally does not identify as a feminist, it is clear that men's refusal to accept gender equality is as a result of patriarchy. Whilst Kefilwe argues that gender equality is not about displacing men, she acknowledges that issues of equity need to be taken into account, as men and women do not start off on an equal footing. Kefilwe critiques the problematic logic of some dominant responses to gender justice efforts which assume that gender justice is achieved by simply replacing men with women.

Shefer et al. (2008), in a qualitative study conducted in two communities in the Western Cape, South Africa, have reported similar views expressed by participants in their study, where participants have seen the focus on gender equality and legislative changes in the country as negatively impacting on men or being at the expense of men. While the argument that the interpretation of gender equality as being in the interests of women and at the expense of men is viewed as a challenge for gender justices, others argue the contrary, that the discomfort that a focus on women's empowerment seems to have opened up for men is valuable. Susan suggests the importance of those in privileged positions being made to feel uncomfortable and displaced, as this is a necessary move towards raising the consciousness required for redress for women and social equality in general. Susan's narrative supports the work done by Zembylas (2015, 2018) on discomfort and more specifically pedagogies of discomfort. The main premise is that experiences of discomfort can be valuable and used to understand and learn about those who have been victims of injustice (Zembylas, 2015, 2018). Discomfort is thus a necessary state for dealing with privilege of various kinds, including racial, class and gender privileges.



As argued in Chapter Two, many scholars have increasingly moved away from the concept of gender equality to gender justice. Scholars such as Goetz (2007) and Molyneux (2007) have argued that gender equality has failed to take into consideration the continued gender inequalities that women face, and that the gender equality discourse has not taken sufficient measures to ensure redress and transformation. The views articulated by key informants Zinzi, Mandy and Susan reflect current debates around gender equality and gender justice. This resistance to and rejection of the concept and policy and practice implementation of gender equality was not evident in the discussions by the women not involved in the gender sector. The key informant interviewees thus clearly, and unsurprisingly given their area of expertise, articulated some of the current debates and contestations that are happening within the feminist movement. Yet these debates are clearly marginal to the majority of women, and do not seem to be impacting on current policies and

practices that are deployed in the name of gender equality. This rejection of the notion of gender equality certainly holds implications for the state, and the work undertaken by organisations and gender activists, to which I will return later in the chapter.

8.3 Impediments to gender equality

Notwithstanding participants different perspectives on what gender equality means and their concerns with the concept and how it is used, participants spoke to their concerns that there are many hurdles in the way of gender equality. Some participants raised various matters, such as societal expectations, and patriarchal heteronormative views of men and women's practices and roles, which have impacted on them leading gender equal lives. I have categorised these matters under the theme impediments to gender equality.



8.3.1 Patriarchal heteronormative views – a deterrent to gender equality

Walby has argued that gender inequality and patriarchy plays itself out in a number of domains, including the economy, polity, violence and civil society. Furthermore, gender relations and regimes can be different at the family level, community level and globally. All these domains and levels are thus in essence where patriarchal heteronormative views are maintained and reproduced. The performance of patriarchal heteronormative views in society was expressed by a number of participants:

Kefilwe: So that is what I was specifically looking at to say, as far as I'm concerned, I think if we have a more equal society then we'll know that, we'll probably be socialized differently [CR: Ok]. And and and you will, there wouldn't be all these genderised roles that means that yoh you are a man, you must take care and if you cannot take care then you are a failure.

For Kefilwe and other participants, society imposes specific subordinate gender roles on women. Participants viewed subordinate roles as a barrier to equality. Kefilwe also notes that if societies were more equal, men and women would be socialised differently and societies would be less patriarchal and violent, which she associates with men having to perform traditional, violent masculinities.

One of the participants in the community focus group also referred to how she, through her behaviour and actions, was reinforcing and reproducing stereotypic gender roles and norms:

Beth (FG Community women): I think it's the society because that's how he saw his stepfather treating his mother financially, so that's how he believes it should be, we've been married for 20 years and it's been like that for 20 years and I'm hoping – and I speak to my son about it all the time, but I'm also – I'm creating, I don't know what I'm busy creating, but I'm also telling my son and my daughter unknowingly, I'm telling the two of them that my son is more important, [inaudible] I'll speak about him like he's the king. [...] So it's the way – it's the way we conduct ourselves also and I'm sending that messages down to her, saying that your brother's worth more or I love him more. It's us as women

Gender, as argued by West and Zimmerman, is an everyday, routine accomplishment. We do gender in the course of our daily interactions and activities. We thus do gender without even being aware that we are. As Connell has argued, we are equally held to account for this doing of gender, especially when it does not conform to normative conceptions of what is perceived as feminine and masculine. In the illustration below, Cindy indicates that she had never been taught to perform traditional gender roles. However, she cites examples of how she behaves towards her husband which can be categorised as gender normative. She does not however view these practices as gender unequal behaviour. This behaviour thus becomes so routine that

Cindy does not see this as anything out of the ordinary, or that she is reproducing gender unequal behaviour:

Cindy (FG Teachers): I do it, now you're making me think about it, but I do that in my home, I dish up for everyone, but I would give him first, and I would never give him a plate like this, it's always in a tray, and funny enough I was never taught – okay with us, when you get married, there would be women who would tell you how to respect your husband, how to do this and that. I never got that, I didn't have anyone who sat with me, no one ever actually told me to do that, I wonder, where did I get it from.

Helman and Ratele (2016), in a study examining how gender (in)equality is constructed and reproduced in the family, found that problematic constructions of masculinity and femininity are often produced and reproduced within families, whilst at the same time, these problematic constructions can be challenged within families. This speaks to participants' views raised above where participants in the focus groups with community members as well as with teachers acknowledged the role that they play in reproducing notions of what it is to be a man and a woman in the family. How do we shift 'problematic' constructions and performance of gender if this is done so routinely and is thus reproduced and maintained in our everyday life? Gender normativity thus functions to keep women in positions of subordination, through the guise that their behavior is 'normal' and routine.

Related to the above discussion was the sentiment expressed by one participant that the inability of men to fulfill traditional gender roles and societal expectations can lead to social ills and violence. There is evidence that shows that men have resisted change in gender relations (and change that comes with gender equality) as they – men – benefit from the patriarchal dividend (Connell, 2011). Furthermore, change may signify threat to their identity, especially in communities where hegemonic masculinity is defined

through men's ability to be providers/breadwinners (see Shefer et al., 2008), as in the case Kefilwe speaks about below:

Kefilwe: Erm probably, err, they probably, I'm thinking that err err if you have a society err that is much more equal that err, especially when you look at at such areas where you find that if if a man if a man is in the house and has to take care of the women and everybody else in the house and the woman is not working, if this man is not able for one reason or the other to be able to fulfill that, many a times that's where you find the violence coming out.

Florence referred to the harmfulness of patriarchal heteronormative masculinities for men and stated that gender equality is good for men too. Florence shows her expertise as a gender scholar who is familiar with the arguments that gender equality can benefit both men and women.

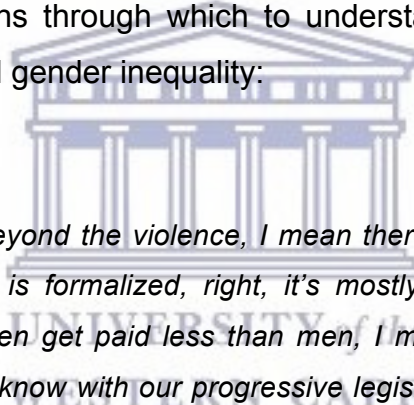
Florence: And I'm just – no I'm just thinking to like – because I'm speaking from the perspective of women, but I think for men too because there are so many pressures around being particular kind of men that are anti-progressive, that are not towards equality, and so that it would make a difference for satisfaction, life satisfaction and happiness for men too, that there be gender equality, and I guess that's something that needs to be sold to men, because I mean – I guess you could say feminists on the one hand are resistant to selling the idea of gender equality to men, understandably, but also have failed in a sense to not sell the idea that patriarchy is harmful also for those in power, for men.

The view that men can be violent because of normative expectations of them is directly linked to the sub-theme, 'free of violence' discussed above. Earlier in the chapter, I referred to the sub-theme of a life 'free from violence' as emerging in participants' discourse about what gender equality signifies to them. As stated previously, gender inequality is thus bad and can be harmful

to both men and women (see Hearn, 2007; Ratele, 2008; United Nations, 2008).

8.3.2 Poverty and income inequalities

In the discussions around poverty and income inequalities, participants noted that poverty is rife and gendered. They also noted income inequalities between men and women, and that the gap between rich and poor has widened, and how that continues to undermine women's equality since women are unable to participate equally with their peers. The inequalities experienced by women are thus structural. Fraser's 'maldistribution of resources' and Connell's (2009) four dimensions of gender relations thus provide a theoretical lens through which to understand women's continued experiences of structural gender inequality:



Florence: [...] But beyond the violence, I mean there's the structural violence, there's poverty that is formalized, right, it's mostly women. There's income inequality, that women get paid less than men, I mean in a sense it's global trends, but still, you know with our progressive legislation, we should be doing better on these things. There is – it's income inequality, it's poverty, it's just access to resources, you know there's gender equality, generally, like high levels of disparity in the workplace.

Candice: Yes and obviously we cannot achieve gender equality or gender equity if we don't address issues of – the gender co-efficient is growing between rich and poor; if we don't address poverty.

The perceptions expressed by Florence and Candice are supported by research which suggests that poverty is gendered. As we have seen in Chapter Four, in South Africa, the number of female-headed households who

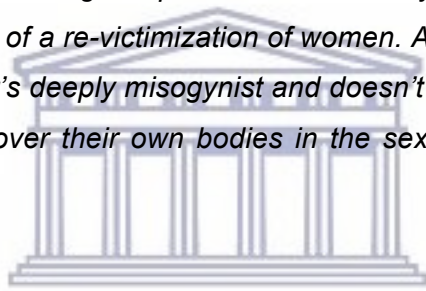
had no employed persons in the household is high (40.3%) (Statistics South Africa, 2014), and provides an indication of the poverty experienced in female-headed households. Recent statistics on unemployment in South Africa further point to more women (29.8%) than men (26%) being part of the unemployed in the country (Statistics South Africa, 2017c).

Poverty, as with lack of resources, certainly influences the manner in which we think about gender (in)equality. Poverty influences women's ability to make choices. Poverty keeps women in unequal relationships. The state has a role to play in eradicating poverty. But so too the private sector, including businesses as well as individuals, have a role in challenging and driving down poverty. However all of these role-players are often complicit, directly and indirectly, in keeping women (and men) in conditions of poverty. As discussed elsewhere, companies continue to discriminate against women with the wage gap, the state fails to hold men accountable through, for example, maintenance legislation which compels men to pay maintenance for their children, women are exploited as domestic workers by other women and men in the households that they work. Poverty is thus integrally linked to gender equality, and women are not likely to indicate that they live gender equal lives if confronted by gender inequality daily.

8.3.3 Violence as a form of backlash to gender gains

In relation to impediments to attaining gender equality, participants spoke to what they perceived as the backlash that women face as a result of some of the gains made. As argued elsewhere in this chapter, gender equality is considered to be beneficial to men, women and other genders. However, it is not always viewed as beneficial by men. Men have resisted gender equality reforms and this resistance has often taken violent forms. Some of the participants acknowledged this in their narratives:

Mandy: And I think another area of resistance certainly is around sexual violence, I mean I think we've seen an incredible use of the law and the courts for women to claim their rights to justice post-sexual violence. And there've been a couple of cases where women have gone 25 years later and actually used the courts to bring to book family members and older men who had actually sexually assaulted them; you've seen that internationally, the Bob Hewitt case, the case with the BBC Jimmy Savell, the women are coming decades later, and the impact of that is very, very significant. And I think what you are seeing is that backlash of, in a way, men, I think trying to reassert in the face of that resistance from women, trying to reassert power. So if you look at the social media environment you see the high levels of misogyny, of absolute – you know very pernicious statements about why women get raped, about that woman should get raped, about how they deserve it under certain conditions, so a kind of a re-victimization of women. And that for me, that whole public discourse that's deeply misogynist and doesn't really recognize women's rights to autonomy over their own bodies in the sexual sphere is part of that backlash.

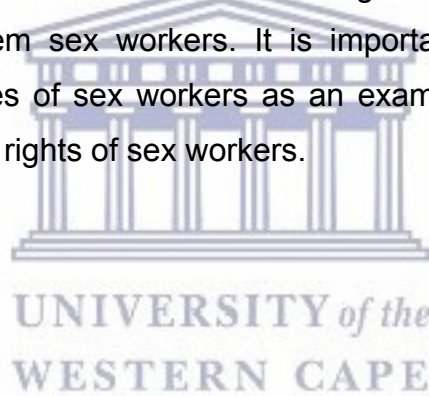


Ratele (2014) is of the opinion that sexual violence has been used by men as a form of backlash against the gains made by women. He argues that “men’s violence against women and girls can be seen not only as an attempt to reassert heteropatriarchal domination over women and girls but perhaps [as] always an attempt to discursively and bodily invalidate these [equality] gains” (Ratele, 2014, p. 514).

In some instances, violence perpetrated against women (and often black men) is at the hands of the state, a patriarchal institution, which impedes gender justice efforts as women are denied participatory parity. It is also much harder to bring about reforms in gender relations when inequalities are woven into the social fabric of societies:

Susan: So, I mean I work with sex workers, who legislatively are not protected, and who in fact are subject to state violence. The police, metro police significantly are responsible for violence against sex workers. And as an institution the police do so because they feel entitled through legislation but also because of their ideas of women because women who sell sex should be punished for that. Err and they, you know they, I think they are symbolic of a very patriarchal institution.

Susan acknowledges that violence can be perpetrated through the state, and her arguments are supported by scholars such as Connell (1987, 2009), who has identified the state as a structure that perpetrates violence, not only through direct means and observable force, as Susan speaks about above, but also through the manner in which the state sets policies or in its treatment of women, particularly those considered to transgress dominant moralities of femininity, amongst them sex workers. It is important to note that Susan raises the circumstances of sex workers as an example, as she works in a NGO advocating for the rights of sex workers.



8.3.4 Religion

Much feminist thinking across differences has problematised religion in relation to gender equality, and put forward the argument that religion is often used to justify women's subordination. The argument runs along the lines that men were created in God's image and that men's domination is the will of God. The data reflects some of the participants' perceptions that religion is used to keep women in positions of subordination and in positions where they are unable to access their rights:

Kelly (FG Teachers): But at church it was like that, and that was one of the reasons that I went – when I couldn't make all this work for me, I left and I never looked back, so now I had to find it hard to even get into a church because now I get issues in terms of you as a woman in our church, you're

not recognised whatsoever, you can't – they – I remember we used to have the ladies' day and then it's like only then that the ladies can now talk to each other and preach and whatever. It's almost like this stuff you see on TV, like the Amish people. And then – otherwise actually the males, they could say and do, now that is where I get that from, I can't deal with it, I can't!

Research has shown how religion, culture and or tradition have been used as arguments to maintain, reinforce and reproduce gender inequalities and heteronormative gender roles and practices, irrespective of geopolitical location (Shefer et al., 2008; Sideris, 2004; Voicu, Voicu & Strapcova, 2009). The role of the church and religious leaders are thus key in addressing gender inequalities and disrupting patriarchy. However, neither the church nor its leaders may see the benefit of this, as gender equality may challenge the very foundations on which some churches are built.



8.3.5 Representation

Whilst many of the participants spoke of representation of women as an indication of achievement of gender equality, there were a few instances where participants indicated that women were not well represented in some sectors, for example in business and in some political spheres, and that this poses a threat to gender justice efforts:

Kefilwe: We we had a study where we were looking specifically within the political representation spectrum. [CR: Ja] And erm, just from there you can see the difficulties that are there, in terms of women, just there, accessing even decision making, just from, you know, the political environment. Just look around, we've just done for instance, our local government elections analysis report and if you look at some of these nuances, where are women? Women, are they represented, they maybe represented more in the wards and probably because they are the ones that are forever at home and therefore they see when the dustbin is not working or whatever, and where

are the men, they are occupying much more lucrative, much more, you know, higher err err positions as far as that is concerned.

As discussed in Chapter Four, there has been an upward trajectory of women's representation in the political sphere. We saw, however, a decrease in the number of women representatives following South Africa's general elections in 2014. With regards to local government elections there has also been an upward trajectory of women representatives in local government, with the exception in 2011, where there was a decline in the women's representation. However, there was a slight increase (3%) in the number of women elected in the local government elections in 2016, with the numbers increasing to 41% (Hicks, Lowe Morna & Fonnah, 2016). It is important to note that the 50/50 targets of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development has not been reached.

In the community focus group, some of the participants bought into a stereotypic notion of femininity, noting that women were not able to lead as well as men, as they were too emotional. Beth, however, shows some ambivalence in her own views, and critically reflects that sometimes women themselves buy into undermining discourses that mar women in leadership. However, this was contested by another participant who indicated that women often make better leaders than men:

Beth (FG Community women): But also I think that – especially when you're in a leadership position, is what I experience, it's that sometimes women can't – they can't lead like men, because sometimes the emotions get into their way of getting their job done. That is what I've experienced somewhere where I previously worked where they just act like bullies instead of getting their job done. [...] So I think that cripples us as women in high positions also sometimes. That is why even us women seem to think that sometimes women don't make good leaders, [...] Sometimes I prefer – even being a

woman – I prefer having a man be in charge because just for the way they get the job done, you see.

Megan (FG Community women): And yes we are emotional beings, however, I also feel that some women can deal with emotion, and they can deal with the job at hand. But also I'm – for me personally I just think women make – sometimes – well most times, often – make better leaders because they have that compassion. Because you can run the country and be a little – uh a bad person sorry [laughter] and be a bad person. But women who have that compassion, because I think even the worst woman has that bit of compassion where she'll also – she might not show it, but she'll feel it. Where with men, hey you know what, I'm fine and I don't care what's happening, that's it.

The views expressed above reflect some of the stereotypical views held in society, and which often reflect perceptions that women cannot hold leadership positions. The views further illustrate how women are also invested in gender binaries and undermining other women, through their buy-in to such stereotypical notions of leadership and gender. A national gender opinion survey conducted by the South African Commission on Gender Equality (see Gouws & Kotze, 2007) found that approximately 30% of respondents thought that women were too emotional and would not be able to handle being in positions of leadership. The same stereotypical view was recently expressed by the President of the African National Congress Women's League, when asked why there were men in the delegation to the ANC's national policy conference. The President, who is also the Minister of Social Development in the South African Cabinet, remarked that women leaders were often too emotional to express themselves clearly and participate in debates (Hunter, 2017). The men on the delegation were brought in to assist the women leaders to articulate their views in the policy debates.

The consequences of such utterances by women in positions of leadership are dire. They reinforce gender stereotypical messages about women's ability, and help maintain and reinforce the notion that men are leaders and women are not good enough nor have the capacity to lead. They reinforce patriarchy, and provide the necessary support to men and some women, as to why women cannot take up leadership positions, thus reinforcing the structural inequalities in society. Above all, they clearly show that the state is complicit in maintaining the status quo of an unequal gender order, despite of all its progressive policies and expressed intentions.

Some participants also indicated that sometimes women are not supportive of other women and were often responsible for other women not succeeding. This was not however the view of the majority of participants. An alternate view was expressed by Grace who spoke about a sense of community that exists amongst people who are marginalised, and specifically women who are marginalised. What Grace gives expression to is seen through the solidarity of the feminist and women's movements, but also through the activism of those who are often 'othered':



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Grace: Say for example it's women and we all get together under the umbrella that we are all marginalized, we are fighting, maybe within the sector so we all hugging because we all work around gender-based violence. There is sort of a comfort and happiness in that position of marginalization and maybe exclusion.

This section focused on those factors, practices and conditions that, in participants' views, hinder women's achievement of gender equality. Despite years of feminist struggles, activism, scholarly research and state interventions, patriarchy continues to characterise gender relations and the gender order. Some participants recognised the function that heteronormative views play in ensuring that gender inequality remains intact.

One participant recognised her own complicitness in reproducing problematic stereotypic views of masculinity and femininity in her family. Normative gender roles were also viewed as contributing to violence – particularly violence perpetrated by men against women. Poverty and continued inequality, despite 20 odd years post-apartheid, were a focus of discussion. Not only was poverty still rife, but also participants' discussions indicated that the gap between the rich and poor was increasing, as to were inequalities between men and women.

State violence and religion were seen as contributors to gender inequality. Both the state, through its use of violence or condonation of violence, as well as religion continues to reinforce patriarchy and keep women in positions of subordination (Epstein, 2007; Nadar, 2009). The representation of women in leadership positions and in positions that were predominantly the reserve of men was seen as an achievement throughout most of the discussions. However, some participants expressed concern about the lack of women's representation in some sectors. Of note were some of the stereotypical views that were expressed about women i.e. that women were often not good leaders as they were too emotional. This popular discourse is very problematic for the work against gender inequality, and more so when expressed by a public representation, as was relayed in the discussions earlier. It makes it so much harder to work against such gender stereotypical norms when women in positions of leadership espouse this view. A related stereotypical view was expressed that women are often not supportive of other women. This was however not a widespread view in discussions and was also negated by others.

8.4 Attainment of gender equality

One of the questions that I asked participants in the individual and focus groups was whether we have achieved gender equality. I wanted to get a sense of whether participants feel there has been progress in relation to gender justice, and to what extent there has been material and lived experience of gender equality. In addition, and in keeping with the overall research question of this study, I wanted to see whether indeed the participants had an experience(s) of gender equality to link with happiness.

In Chapter Seven, the discussions captured participants' views on what the changes in legislation have meant in their lives and in women's lives generally. It was clear that this was not a straightforward matter. Participants were of the opinion that there has been much progress with the enactment of legislation but that challenges remained. Given that the questions on legislative changes and attainment of gender equality are linked, it is thus not surprising that the responses to the latter question follows the same trajectory as the responses to the first question on what legislative changes have meant in the lives of women. Overwhelmingly, participants felt that the goal of gender equality has not been achieved. Notwithstanding, they felt that considerable progress has been made towards the goal of gender equality:

Hannah: Uh, no, that's the short answer, what we do have however is something we've never had before, and that is we have a knight in shining armour that we can send out to slay the dragon of gender inequality and that is the constitution.

Some participants indicated that gender equality has been achieved to some extent, but then would qualify the response by stating that gender equality has been achieved constitutionally or legally. There was no outright response that yes; gender equality has been achieved in South Africa:

Kefilwe: Ooh hê [laughter]. I I don't think we have. I mean, like I said, we still have a lot of implementation issues that are there. Mm, like many countries, I think, you know, having put at the heart of our legislative framework, some of the international instruments like your Beijing and your whatever, there may be areas where, yes, we've done well when you look at MDGs there may be areas where maybe in terms of health, and what have you, maybe we are doing well and what have you. But I don't think really, overall, we can come out and say we've done, we have gender equality in in South Africa, you know.

Candice: Constitutionally and legally on paper yes, in practice no.

Participants in the focus groups with community members and teachers presented mixed views on the question of whether gender equality has been achieved. Here too we see that gender equality is complex, with many participants indicating that the goal of gender equality has not been achieved and others stating that perhaps it has been partially achieved:



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Megan (FG Community women): But I think it's a partial thing, I think in certain sectors like education, I think in business, you hear about more business women now, I think also the business women are probably a bit younger. Young women are starting to take a stance and they're saying; "you know what, we want to be as good as the next man" and so I would think it's partial, I think it's a work in progress. Where it's changing to where we're going to be on that same level.

In the above, Megan suggests that it is within the control of women to become equal to men. She refers to women's agency.

Cindy indicated that women have had access to opportunities but that this is often where companies are trying to comply with regulations relating to employment equity. Having women represented in organisations thus often serve as window dressing, which belies that transformative change has been brought about in organisations:

Cindy (FG Teachers): I would say no, in a sense, from what I've seen, most companies hire females because they're forced to, they need a score. So it's like – okay from where my husband is working, when I look at how they do things, they check; it's time for this now, maybe they need to sell this portion of the company to a certain company, and the other company will say "but you don't meet the BEE score; we need females, we need certain black people." And you will see them actually creating posts. I remember there was actually this lady, she didn't even have a title, but they said come.

Some of the participants opined that gender equality is not static but something that changes and that is dynamic. In the interview with Grace, she indicated that gender equality is not an outcome that one reaches but rather that legislated gender equality is a "little milestone":

CR: Do you think that we or have we achieved gender equality in South Africa?

Grace: No

CR: Tell me more

Grace: The legislative part – I mean it is written within the law, I think uh – I don't think – for me I think it's always like – I don't think it's about the actual achievement, it's like the little milestones. Because if we actually say that patriarchy is dynamic, right, that power is also dynamic, that gender equality is not – because feminism was never about taking power over, it was balancing power, right? That is also dynamic, and it played continuously and had to be navigated, then I think that it's to keep our eye on it, so I think a lot has shifted towards gender equality and there are moments of reaching it, and I think we should be clear on what are those signifiers of those moments.

As indicated in Chapter Eight, Mandy had a concern with the concept of gender equality and questioned the dominant liberal feminist notion that all that women should be striving for is equality with men. In her response to the question of whether we have attained gender equality, she was clear that gender is always a site of contestation, and therefore gender equality is not a fixed outcome but rather something that takes different forms at different moments:

Mandy: Well first of all I think it's a moving target, I mean I don't sort of accept this liberal notion of a march to progress, you know, the past we didn't have equality and now we do, and you know we're slowly moving forward, always forever. So I think there's a – it's a site of contestation; gender is a site of contestation because it's a site of power. And it's constantly a negotiation of power in gender relations and I think there will be, for as long as I can imagine let's say. And sometimes there are gains made and there's an ability to, you know, to challenge hetero-patriarchal power relations and men's supremacy and other times there's a loss in a sense. So I'll be very hesitant to say you know that there's this thing called an achievement because that would mean that there would be an end of a politics of resistance to existing power relations and that for me would be very problematic, and it would be depoliticizing. So I think that these contestations around gender power relations are happening everywhere, they are happening in all spheres, in all social political contexts.

Both Grace and Mandy make reference to the centrality of power in gender (equality). Power relations and gender relations are constantly negotiated and re-negotiated, and are sites for contestation and resistance, as has been argued in Chapter Two. Thus, whilst for Grace there have been some gains made with regards to gender equality, it was essential that we remain focused on the gender equality goal, as there are continuous shifts in the gains made. Mandy expresses a similar sentiment that power in gender relations will always be a site of contestation and a site of resistance, thus challenging the neoliberal position which neglects to engage with power.

Many participants in the study indicated that gender equality has not been achieved. For some, including Mandy and Grace, gender equality is not an outcome, and as power is always negotiated in gender relations, gender relations will continue to be sites of negotiation and resistance. A number of other participants acknowledged that some progress has been made. In this regard, they spoke mostly that the progress has been related to legislative achievements. Notwithstanding the legislative achievements, gender equality and gender justice remains elusive for these participants.

8.5 Conclusion

As discussed in Chapter Four, South Africa has acceded to several gender related international and regional instruments, and has enacted numerous gendered domestic legislation. The intention behind these measures has been to ensure a more democratic and equitable society across race, gender, class and locations. The state, as seen in South Africa, has played an active role in engineering gender change in gender relations and gender performances, amongst others, through the enactment of these policies, etc. This chapter has largely looked at what such an engineering process – through the discussion of what gender equality means – has meant for women.

Sen (1992, 1995, 1999) has argued that the capability approach, which takes into account what women value and what they are able to achieve, provides the best framework for understanding gender inequality, and thus implies that it is a good framework for evaluating whether gender equality goals have been met.

The manner in which participants spoke to notions of gender equality reaffirms a number of the capabilities which Nussbaum asserts are requisite

for social justice. Gender equality for participants in this study includes – the absence of discrimination, a life free from violence, sharing of responsibilities, realising of one’s potential (to be the best that one can be), having voice and agency, to ensure that there is redress, and having access to resources and recognising that gender equality still needs to be navigated. The various notions of gender equality align with the different capabilities identified by Nussbaum (1999, 2003). In the table below, I present participants’ notions of gender equality and the corresponding capabilities:

Table 42: Notions of gender equality and corresponding capability

Notion of gender equality	Capability affected
Absence of discrimination	Control over one’s environment, affiliation
Life free from violence	Life, bodily integrity, bodily health, senses, imagination and thought, emotions
Sharing of responsibilities	Play, bodily health
Voice and agency	Senses, imagination and thought

Participants’ notions of redress and access to resources can be seen as enabling factors in realising of their potential and being the best that one can be. This supports the arguments made by Sen (1992) and Fraser (2005, 2007a) that economic redistribution is an important factor for social justice. Notwithstanding the importance of resources, Sen (1992) and Robeyns (2003) have argued that whilst resources are important for well-being, they are not well-being itself. Redress and resources further enable individuals to meet their capabilities (Nussbaum, 1999, 2003).

How women have described what gender equality means to them holds immense value for the work of the state, but also for organisations working in the gender sector. The state will need to look at how it speaks about gender equality, and whether this reflects women's understandings of gender equality. In line with the capability approach, it is of value for the state to ascertain whether their gendered legislation and policies, which are intended to bring about positive change in the lives of its citizens (and specifically women), have facilitated the attainment of these capabilities. The findings of this study provide some insight into this question.

Based on the narratives of the participants, we note that a number of these capabilities have not been met. Participants noted a number of challenges which impede their capabilities, and which in terms of Fraser's (1995, 1998, 2000, 2005) trivalent view of justice with the three dimensions – economic, cultural and political – affects their ability to participate as equals with peers, thus impeding gender justice efforts. One such category of challenge relates to societal expectations of men and women, and the dominance of normative gender practices and roles. Subordinate roles of women were seen as a barrier to gender equality, and one that directly impacts on women's ability for participatory parity and achievement of their capabilities.

Women's subordinate positions and roles are often produced in the home, and gender inequalities are reproduced in the home. This is not always only evident through how boys and girls are treated differently in the home, but also through other measures such as the education of boys being valued more, or the health care of boys being given priority above girls (Sen, 1995). Participants' narratives spoke of how they were producing and reproducing problematic normative behaviour in their homes. One participant reflected on how she was reinforcing these behaviours in her household, and was concerned about the message this was sending to her daughter and son i.e. that she valued her son above her daughter. In South Africa, one recent example is a study by Helman and Ratele (2016) that provides evidence of

how gender inequalities are reproduced in the home. It is therefore insufficient that measures are taken only in the public arena. It is imperative that children learn the value of respecting others and treating others with dignity, and knowing that they are able to achieve irrespective of their genders, and that they are valued.

Gender inequality cannot be understood in isolation from other forms of subordinations. This is an argument that has been strongly made by postcolonial feminists as well as by intersectional feminists. The findings of this study provide support for the need for an intersectional approach to gender equality. Participants spoke of the continued poverty and income inequalities that women still to face. The face of poverty is still black and female. Not only did participants note that the gap between the rich and poor is widening but also that the gap in income inequalities between men and women is still ever present. In South Africa, there has further been widespread acceptance of the fact that broad-based economic transformation has not happened and that economic transformation has only benefited a small minority. Economic inequalities need addressing in order for shifts to be seen in gender equality. Participants in this study identified economic inequalities related to poverty and income inequalities as having a direct impact on gender equality. This reinforces Fraser's (1998, 2005) identification of the economic dimension, which constrains participatory parity. If women do not have access to resources, it will impact on their ability to participate equally with their peers, make choices, affect their agency and ultimately what they are able to achieve. It impacts on their capabilities and well-being.

Participants' perceptions of representation of women in the public sphere tended to focus on the recognition that women have now taken up a number of leadership positions, but also recognised that there are a number of sectors where women are still under-represented. Clearly, measures to ensure that women are in positions of leadership have not been successful in all spheres. I have noted elsewhere in this dissertation that there has been an upward

trajectory of women's entry into the political sphere. Ostensibly, within the first few years of democracy, value had been placed on numbers and getting a critical mass of women into positions of leadership. The discourse has shifted over the years from one of critical mass to who is represented and who are in positions of leadership. Scholars such as Hassim (2005a) have argued that not only do we require more women in the state, but that we also require more poor women and women who are assertive moving into positions of power and leadership. As we have seen, not all women have access to leadership positions because "class, homophobia, race and xenophobia mediate women's access to power" (Gqola, 2007, p. 115). Meaningful gender transformation requires that women are represented in positions of power and leadership across race, class and locality.

In the community focus group, the view was also expressed that sometimes women were not good leaders and that women were often too emotional. However, within the same discussion participants were saying that women could also be leaders. Some participants also opined that women were not supportive of each other. However, one of the gender activists had a different opinion, saying that women often found solidarity with each other because of their marginalised positions. We should take cognisance that women have often organised on the basis of gender. We should also take cognisance that there have been significant criticisms within the feminist circles of the differences amongst women, and that the struggles of all women are not the same. Black feminists have argued that white feminists have not taken other prejudices that black women face such as race and class into account (hooks, 1986; hooks, 2000; Carby, 1996). The struggles of white women have often been presented as that of *all* women.

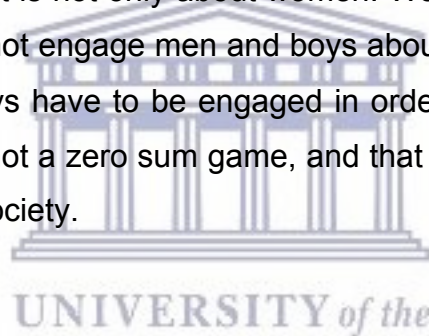
As seen in this chapter, it is notable that a number of participants reject the notion of gender equality. Some participants expressed discomfort with the term, as it signifies a normative male model that women should aspire to, which they reject. As mentioned by one of the participants in the study,

gender equality was a concept that feminists and activists had access to at the dawn of democracy in South Africa. However, participants feel that gender equality as a concept does not adequately convey the transformative moments that should take place. Nor do they feel that it articulates the urgency or the extent of social injustices suffered by women, girls, boys and men, nor does it address the injustices of subordination on the basis of race and class and other intersectionalities. This is an argument that has been taken up by a wide range of feminist scholars in diverse contexts, such as Goetz (2007), Mama (2002) and Molyneux (2007), who prefer to use the notion of gender justice as opposed to gender equality (see Chapter Two for discussions on gender equality and gender justice).

As reinforced by participants' perceptions, South Africa's national gender legislative framework can best be described as reformist. A key aspect of its broad framework is to ensure that there is gender balance in positions of leadership, access to job and business opportunities, access to healthcare and education opportunities, amongst others. Specific affirmative action legislation has been introduced to ensure that there are sufficient numbers of women who have access in the workplace. Whilst not government policy, the ruling party of the day – the African National Congress – has implemented a 50/50 policy to ensure that women are elected onto their electoral lists, again, an indication of gender balancing. A key policy of government has been gender mainstreaming, which, as has been argued in Chapter Four, has not delivered the results that had been expected. As with all reformist and ameliorative policies and approaches, it does not go far enough to ensure that the very social fabric is disrupted and challenged, but rather ameliorates injustices in society. This is what many of the participants in this study expressed.

The term gender equality does not speak to the suffering of women. For some participants, the notion of gender equality has been watered down by including men, obliterating the suffering of women, and is used to reinforce

patriarchy. We have seen that the gender equality project has recognised the need to involve men and boys. This is evident through the work of the United Nations, in particular following a number of United Nations Conferences on Women. There has however, over the last number of years, been a proliferation of studies on men and masculinities (see Connell; Hearn; Kimmel; Morrell; Ratele), numerous scholars have written about men, masculinities and gender equality (see Connell; Shefer; Hearn; Helman & Ratele; Holter), and a number of international and local projects such as Promundo, MenEngage and Sonke Gender Justice have all taken up work on men, masculinities and gender equality. Here I differ with Mandy who has argued that the gender equality discourse is often used by men to reinforce patriarchy. Mandy also appeared to question the involvement of men and boys in the struggle for gender equality. The gender equality project needs to include men and boys, it is not only about women. We cannot expect to bring about change if we do not engage men and boys about their gender practices and roles. Men and boys have to be engaged in order for them to recognise that gender equality is not a zero sum game, and that gender equality is good for them and for all of society.



Given the discussions in Chapter Seven pertaining to what the gendered legislative changes have meant in the lives of women, it is not surprising that overwhelmingly participants observed that gender equality has not been achieved in South Africa. As discussed in Chapter Seven, despite the numerous achievements made with regards to legislative reform, gender equality was not a lived reality for many women.

In understanding why the women in the study indicated that gender equality has not been achieved, it is important to reflect on what the women said gender equality means to them. To reiterate, they argued that gender equality entails the absence of discrimination, a life free from violence, sharing of responsibilities, the recognition of differences (including that men and women have different needs), realising of one's potential (to be the best that one can

be), to have one's rights protected, having voice and agency, to ensure that there is redress, having access to resources, and recognising that gender equality still needs to be navigated. Whilst there is overlap between what the state refers to as gender equality (as discussed on Chapter Four) and the understanding of gender equality of the women in this study, there is some disjuncture; and evidently for the women in this study, gender equality has not been achieved.

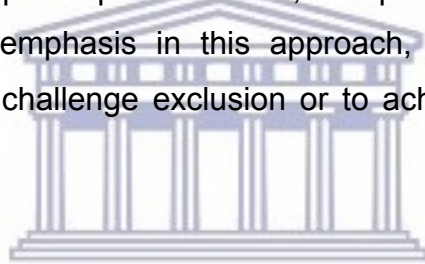
As indicated, participants spoke of gender equality as having their rights protected. In Chapter Four I dealt with many of the aspects listed by participants as related to gender equality, including violence against women. I have shown in Chapter Four that there is considerable violence perpetrated against women. Whilst there may be legislation in place to ensure that one's rights are protected, rights are very often violated when women are unable to access services or access services in a dignified manner. Evidence suggests that police are often reluctant to open case dockets in cases of domestic violence, arrest abusers, accompany women to collect their positions, accompany them to a shelter, or to take them for medical treatment (Gqola, 2015; Vetten, 2014). To reiterate, the manner in which women spoke about violence as a marker of gender inequality is important. Addressing violence against women is an important step to ensuring gender equality, but also for women's perceptions that gender equality is a lived experience.

Some women in the study had further indicated that gender equality signifies access to resources and redress. As discussed elsewhere, redistribution of resources is an important aspect of gender justice (Fraser, 1995, 1998, 2007a). Hassim (2005a) has argued that representation of women in the formal organisations of the state and the inclusion of notion of gender equality in policy documents and legislation has:

not led to redistribution of resources and power in ways that change the structural forces on which women's oppression rests. Inclusion has

rather been an avenue for reinforcing elite women's access to the formal political system while not (as yet) translating clearly into policies that address the needs of poor women (n.p.).

Perhaps the reason why many of the participants said that gender equality has not been realised is because it has not had the transformative outcomes that had been expected. Susan verbalised this in our discussion. Susan draws on what Hassim (2005a) has referred to as South Africa, and the women's and feminist movements, taking an inclusionary approach to gender politics and women's concerns. As discussed elsewhere, Lorber (2010) has referred to this as the gender balance approach, and Fraser (2000) refers to it as an affirmative approach. This inclusionary approach prioritises women's access to positions of leadership and political office, and places less of a priority on policy outcomes. The emphasis in this approach, as argued by Hassim (2005a), is to primarily challenge exclusion or to achieve a gender balance (Lorber, 2010).

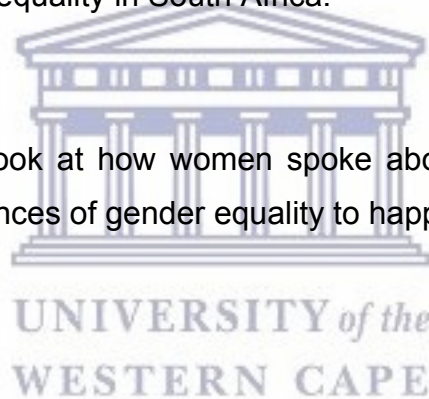


Some participants had ambivalent views about whether gender equality has been achieved or not, and indicated that there has been partial achievement. This is reflected in the discourse that gender equality has been achieved constitutionally and within the workplace – whilst acknowledging that representation is not what it could be or that women are only in the positions they are in workplaces because of the obligations that the regulatory framework places on organisations. Participants' discourse may also reflect their reality that *de jure* gender equality has been achieved but not *de facto* gender equality.

In conclusion, this chapter presented participants' perceptions and experiences of gender equality. In doing so, I considered how women spoke about gender equality and what it means to them. Here we have seen that some women rejected the notion of gender equality, whilst others felt that it

was a concept that did not capture the transformative moments envisaged by it. Participants largely also attributed different meanings to gender equality, ranging from living lives free from violence, to having access to resources. Furthermore, participants shared what they perceive as impediments to gender equality. This chapter discussed whether participants saw gender equality as having been achieved or not. As clearly demonstrated, there was ambivalence about this. Notwithstanding, participants overwhelmingly indicated that gender equality had not been achieved. Or as opined by Mandy and Grace, gender equality is not an outcome, and as power and gender relations are always negotiated, gender equality is not something that can ever be achieved. How participants spoke about and experience gender equality is important as it holds implications for gender policies, programmes implemented by the state and other role players, as well as how we talk about and think about gender equality in South Africa.

In the next chapter, I look at how women spoke about happiness and how they relate their experiences of gender equality to happiness.



Chapter Nine: Women's experiences and perceptions of happiness and its links with gender equality

9.1 Introduction

In this third and final chapter of the qualitative results of my study I present and discuss the qualitative findings on the central question: are gender equality and happiness linked, and how? Whereas the previous two chapters looked at women's experiences and perceptions of legislative reform and gender equality respectively, in this chapter my focus is on women's experiences and perceptions of happiness and links with equality in terms of gender.

Everybody wants to be happy, or so scholars have argued (Argyle, 2001). It is my contention too that happiness should be central to what we want in life. In looking at women's experiences and perception of happiness, I scrutinise women's account of happiness. Do women want to be happy? What does happiness mean to them? Are they happy? In answering these questions, I consider how the women constructed happiness, whether they thought of themselves as being happy, the things in life that contributed to their happiness or lack thereof, and what they saw as deterrents of happiness. Finally, I look at whether, in the participants' views and imagination, gender equality and happiness were linked or not, as well as what the links (if any) entailed.

I will address the above questions in the following manner: I begin, in the next section, by presenting and analysing how some participants rejected the notion of happiness, whilst others articulated elements of both eudaimonic and hedonic notions of happiness. In this section, I also note the emergence of notions of happiness, which are not within the normative realm of how happiness has been constructed. In section 9.3, the question of whether

participants are happy is discussed. Many of the participants indicated that they were happy. The reasons for their happiness (or unhappiness for those who indicated that they are unhappy) are discussed in section 9.4. The section thereafter examines participants' perceptions on whether gender equality and happiness are linked. In this section, I also present a schema that I have developed, *four quadrants of happiness and gender equality*, that speak to the emerging linkages between happiness and gender equality.

9.2 Constructions of happiness

As indicated in Chapter Three, in this study happiness is defined as overall satisfaction with one's life as a whole. Happiness is used interchangeably with life satisfaction and subjective well-being.

Prior to looking at what emerged from the data, it is important that I refer readers again to the literature and how happiness is conceptualised in this literature. This is best depicted in the illustration below:

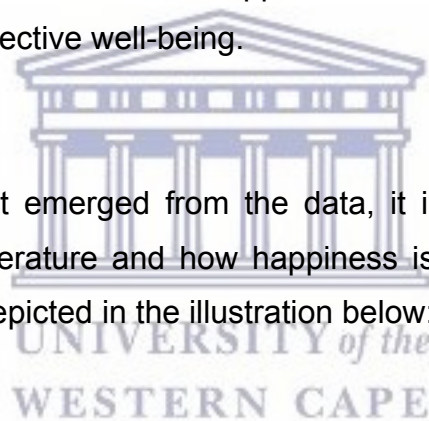
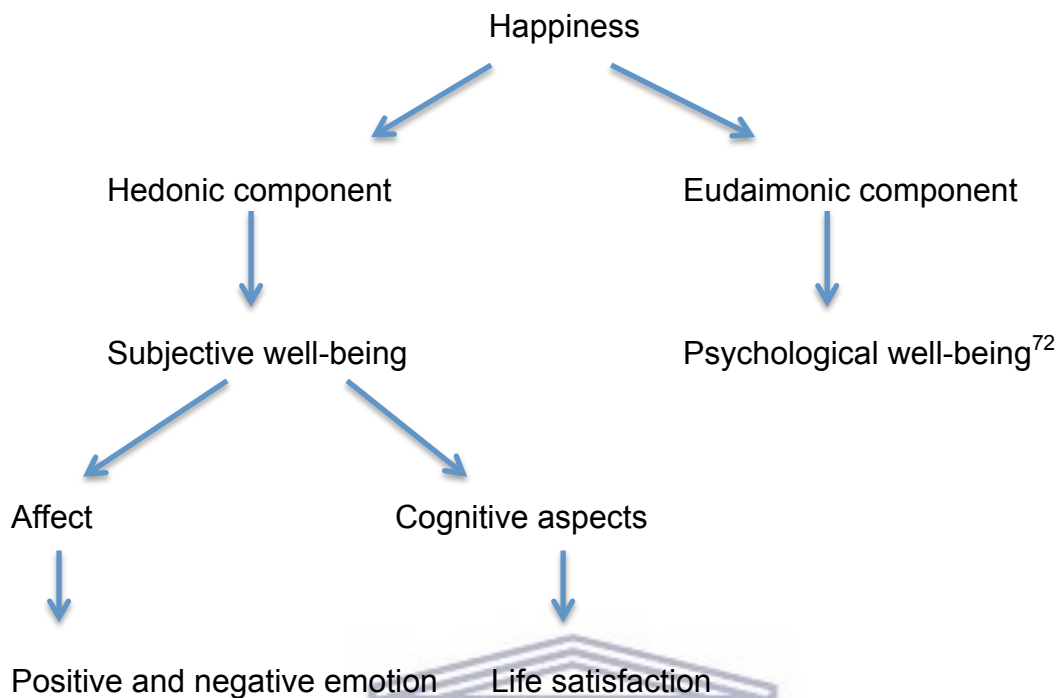


Figure 5: Happiness



The hedonic component of happiness focuses on “enjoyment, pleasure, satisfaction and comfort” whereas the eudaimonic component focuses on “meaning, purpose, expression of potential, being involved with something larger than life” (Wissing, 2014, p.7). In the present study, as indicated in earlier chapters, happiness is conceptualised as subjective well-being, operationalised as one’s overall satisfaction with her life as a whole. Despite underscoring that happiness is defined as life satisfaction, it was interesting that during the interviews participants did not restrict themselves to speaking of happiness as only life satisfaction. In broad terms, when asked how they define happiness, most participants articulated a range of different meanings of happiness, ranging over both the hedonic and eudaimonic components of happiness, as well as happiness as inter-connected to others.

⁷² Refers to mental health, meaning (in daily life, life events, inter-personal relations), self-actualisation, personal growth.

As outlined in the methodology chapter (Chapter Five), during the interviews I indicated to participants how I use the term happiness. I then asked them how they would define happiness in their lives, what does happiness mean to them and whether they are happy. Notwithstanding, the questions around happiness seem to have caught many participants off guard. It appeared as if it is something about which many of the participants had not reflected. It should be borne in mind that the key informants interviewed were based on their gender expertise (that is, not because of any expertise within the growing field of happiness studies). And the participants of the focus groups were not experts on gender or happiness studies.

9.2.1 Inadequacy of happiness as a construct

Having told participants how I viewed happiness in the study, I asked them what happiness means to them. Some participants expressed ambivalence about using the term happiness. Palesa was uncomfortable with the concept of happiness, as I had defined it – as denoting life satisfaction. She saw happiness as referring to affect i.e. positive emotions, and did not see how happiness could refer to one's overall satisfaction of one's life. Happiness, was thus a feeling, emotion or as some scholars have referred to affect, as the 'ups and downs' of life (Frey & Stutzer, 2002a; Sachs, 2012). For Palesa, happiness was also tied to specific moments and not to the overall evaluation of one's life:

Palesa: Yes, all of that, all of these terms that you're using, self-enjoyment, enjoyment of life, being, feeling fulfilled, well-being, those are terms that I would embrace. Happiness, to me, you know, is almost like, I know that it is a field, that's being explored now, but for me, it just doesn't sit comfortably], it's almost like this, people talk about positive psychology, err there are certain, you know, challenges I find with the terminology, it's almost as if happy, for me being happy means, you are excited about something specific, [C: Ok] you know, to say happiness as an overall definition of your stance in life just

doesn't seem right [C: mm], because you know, there's there are moments of happiness, moments of joy, but within my experience there are moments of sadness, you know.

It is interesting that Palesa speaks about happiness only as positive emotion. Analytically and theoretically, as shown in Chapter Three and in section 9.2 in this chapter, happiness includes affect, both positive and negative. In practice or in daily experiences, though, as indicated by Palesa, happiness only refers to positive emotion, and it does not capture the moments of sadness or negative emotion.

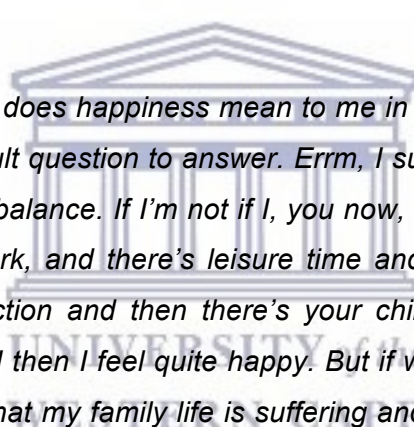
I read into Palesa's understanding of happiness a sense of temporality. This positive emotion defines a specific moment(s) only and therefore, for her, does not does not encapsulate the evaluation of one's life, which would encompass more than just a moment. She clearly indicates discomfort with the term, yet prefers the terms well-being or enjoyment of life. For her, well-being and enjoyment of life are not part of the same umbrella as happiness. She further does not think that the term well-being can be used interchangeably with happiness, as I have used it here. The use of the concept happiness interchangeably with subjective well-being or life satisfaction has, however, been supported by a number of scholars including Veenhoven (2004) .

Palesa's discomfort with the notion of happiness as implying overall satisfaction with one's life, as well as its incompatibility to be used interchangeably with life satisfaction and well-being, points to the ineffectiveness of the notion of happiness to convey the broad spectrum of what well-being entails. It draws attention to how the notions of happiness, well-being and life satisfaction convey different interpretations and understandings for different people and laypersons not engaged in happiness scholarly work. This has implications for research undertaken and policy

directives, especially where the notions are used interchangeably. Especially as the recipients of the policy directives may have a different understanding of what is meant by the notions of happiness, subjective well-being and thus the intentions of the policies might not be realised.

9.2.2 Eudaimonic happiness

Many participants spoke about the psychological components of happiness: mental and emotional happiness, peacefulness, a balanced life and meaning. In the literature, these aspects refer to the psychological well-being (eudaimonia) of the individual:



Susan: Errm, what does happiness mean to me in my life? Errm, gosh, that's that's quite a difficult question to answer. Errm, I suppose for me it's balance, having a sense of balance. If I'm not if I, you now, there is a pie chart of your life and there's work, and there's leisure time and there's your partnership, your social connection and then there's your children, and if I have all of those things, then I then I feel quite happy. But if work takes completely over and I always feel that my family life is suffering and I can't get to my child on time before she goes to sleep at night, and you know that kind of stuff, you know, then I feel, then I struggle.

In the above extract, Susan speaks about *balance*. From the extract we can also infer that with balance she implies that she is able to function well, as there is equilibrium in her life. The ability to function well is linked with the eudaimonic component of well-being (Wissing, 2014), which in turn, refers to psychological well-being. She also speaks about those areas of her life, or life domains, which have an impact on happiness. The life domains mentioned by Susan include work, family, interpersonal relations and leisure time. These life domains have also been identified by Delle Fave, Brdar, Freire, Vella-Brodrick

and Wissing (2011) and Frey and Stutzer (2002a) as being associated with happiness.

The eudaimonic conception of happiness has been associated with fulfilling potential and personal growth. In the interviews, Zinzi, as seen in the extract below, speaks about happiness as *achievement*, and Palesa expresses similar sentiments about achievement and *being the best that you can be*:

Zinzi: the moments when I've experienced happiness, I've really felt close to death and it was not a negative experience at all. It was a very calming, pleasant, satisfying, errm and an experience of complete peacefulness and like the sense of achievement. [CR: Err] Ja, like, ja, I thought like this is why I came to the world, and I did it and it feels good, thank you very much, we can close the curtain.

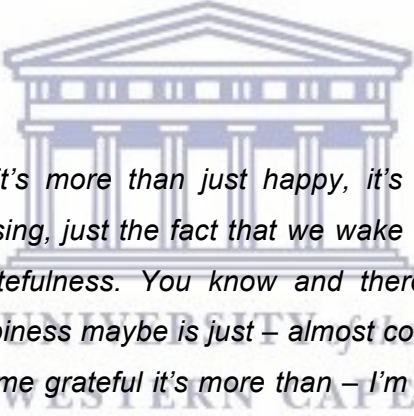
Palesa: Happiness, err, err, I find it challenging concept. But well-being, I will go with that very much. I'll say yes, absolutely, because you know, you know being able to achieve, being the best that you can be, having the space and the resources to become the best that you can be, it speaks to this notion of well-being. Because you are pursuing a goal.

The above narratives reflect the importance of achieving that which you wish to achieve and which you value. This realisation of potential and achievement is an important component of functioning well (Wissing, 2014). From a capabilities approach perspective, this achievement is known as a functioning (Sen, 1999; Robeyns, 2003). According to Sen (1993), “functionings represents parts of the state of a person – in particular the various things that he or she manages to do or be in leading a life” (p. 31). Drawing on Fraser’s view of justice, we see the importance of resources and the distribution of resources in aiding the process of being the best that one can be. As argued by Fraser (2005, 2007a), the redistribution of resources allows participatory

parity and addresses the economic distributive injustices in neoliberal capitalist societies.

9.2.3 Hedonic happiness

In the discussions with Amy, she spoke about happiness as the *joys* and *positive emotions* felt in one's day to day life, as well as *satisfaction with her life*. This speaks to the subjective well-being component of happiness i.e. both affective (emotions) as well as cognitive (life satisfaction). Another hedonic happiness concept mentioned is contentment. *Contentment* was a construct used by Jane in the focus group with teachers. Jane spoke about contentment as being more than happiness. She equated contentment with gratefulness, being a blessing:



Jane: [...] I think it's more than just happy, it's to be grateful you know because it's a blessing, just the fact that we wake up in the morning, it's not happiness, it's gratefulness. You know and there's that level, I think, of happiness. So happiness maybe is just – almost content, it's okay, you know, but when you become grateful it's more than – I'm just speaking my – this is my own perception, you're more than happy.

As shown above, participants understood happiness as joy, feeling good about oneself, affect, satisfaction with life and contentment. These components of happiness has been identified as hedonic happiness in the literature. This finding corroborates those of scholars such as Keyes (2002), Ryan and Deci (2001) and Wissing (2014).

9.2.4 Understanding of happiness beyond hedonia or eudaimonia

Participants expressed notions of happiness which cannot be attached to either hedonic or eudaimonic happiness. Mandy, who expressed a concern with the notion of happiness, spoke of happiness as diminishing the suffering of others. She refers to this *diminishing of suffering* as contentment. However, I interpret her use of contentment as conceptually different from the manner in which Jane spoke about contentment:

Mandy: [...] And then I think well what matters for me about how people in the world and myself included feel, like – okay what – and then I get to the issue of suffering, like the less suffering the better. That for me maybe a measure of contentment; is the lessening of the extent to which one suffers. [...] so for me part of the work is to try and see how we can minimize that suffering both for ourselves and in relation to others and so it is a way – you know I'll buy the idea of happiness if it's about that, if it's about the diminishment of suffering, ja.

Participants further spoke about their well-being in relation to others through *improving the lives of others, contributing to and involvement in the lives of others in order to make a difference, for the better*. These notions again, fail to fall within the dominant constructions of happiness as either hedonic or eudaimonic. It appears to add a layer of understanding of happiness not quite captured in the hegemonic views of happiness as eudaimonic or hedonic:

Mandy: I think that I feel engaged in being – you know in being in this world, where I find myself, for me I derive a huge amount of succour and of life force from that; so being politically engaged and involved and feeling like I have something to contribute and I want to do stuff, you know. And I know the principles that inform that, wanting to do stuff, and that gives me a great deal of, let's say, satisfaction.

Sandra: Happiness to me also means that yes I need to feel good about myself, but also need to feel good about what I'm doing to better and improve the lives of others because in the end it will make me happy, that's the type of person I am. My happiness is like throwing a stone in the river and it has spread out, one light has to light up the world, then I'm internally happy.

Whilst researchers such as Layard, Clark and Senik (2012), Helliwell, Barrington-Leigh, Harris and Huang (2009), Schwartz and Sendor (1999), and Brown, Nesse, Vinokur and Smith (2003) have all identified altruism or helping others as having a positive impact on the lives of those offering the help, I argue that what Mandy and Sandra raises is conceptually different from the notion of altruism. Mandy and Sandra speak about their happiness as being tied to or related to the well-being of others. The other in this instance, refers not only to others as individuals but also to others, as in in the well-being of others as a collective – community or society. Their happiness is shaped by the inter-connections between people/society and by the well-being of the collective others. Their happiness or life satisfaction is perhaps not only informed by values of individual achievement such as autonomy, agency and personal achievement, but also by values such as community or social engagement, collective well-being of others, and making a difference in the lives of others.

In my study, the emergence of an understanding of happiness beyond hedonia and eudaimonia provides support for the argument made by researchers that acknowledges that happiness or well-being is influenced by country contexts or cultural diversity (Delle Fave & Bassi, 2009; Diener, Oishi & Lucas, 2004; Khumalo, 2014; Tov & Diener, 2007; Wissing & Temane, 2008). These researchers have argued that aspects of happiness may look different in different countries depending on the culture(s) and socio-demographic factors. Differences have been found in how people in the West construct well-being as opposed to those in the East or those in Africa (Cheng et al., 2011). Differences as well similarities have also been found within countries, as is the case in South Africa. Based on their study among white

Afrikaans and English South Africans and black South Africans, who were mainly Sestwana speaking, Wissing and Temane (2008) found overlap in the construal of psychological well-being, but also some differences in patterns of well-being based on social/cultural contexts. The emergence of constructs of happiness beyond hedonia and eudaimonic thus hold potential for the development of a happiness or well-being construct unique to South Africa.

Early studies on happiness had not focussed much on the distinction between hedonic and eudaimonic happiness (Kashdan, Biswas-Diener & King, 2008). As argued by Kashdan et al. (2008), this distinction only became the focus of study in recent years. In recent years, where happiness studies have been undertaken, the studies have tended to focus on either the hedonic or the eudaimonic aspects of happiness. Delle Fave, Brdar, Freire, Vella-Brodrick and Wissing (2011) have argued that happiness studies have further investigated eudaimonic and hedonic happiness quantitatively rather than qualitatively. They have also argued that whilst scholars have used the terms happiness, subjective well-being or life satisfaction interchangeably, and that these terms have been defined by mainly philosophers, there is a dearth of information on how laypeople speak of happiness. As I have indicated in Chapter One, this gap in information forms a key part of the rationale for this study. I had set out with a specific definition of happiness in mind, and I had asked participants what happiness means to them. As can be seen from the above section, participants spoke of happiness as including hedonic and eudaimonic aspects. Whilst they did not distinguish between the different components of happiness, we see from the study that participants spoke to mostly eudaimonic components of happiness, some hedonic components, as well as to a component of inter-connectedness. Happiness, according to the participants in this study, meant the ups and downs of everyday life, joys (emotions or affect), life satisfaction and contentment (cognitive evaluation) as well as achievement, balanced life, and positive mental health (psychological well-being). There is thus considerable overlap and no clear distinction for the participants of this study between hedonic and eudaimonic happiness. Support for this finding is provided by Kashdan et al. (2008) who have made

the argument that there is overlap between hedonic and eudaimonic happiness, and that the hedonic and eudaimonic variables affect one another.

An early indication from my study, shows that it is important to have a more inclusive and integrated look at the term happiness. It is best to undertake happiness research that includes both the hedonic component as well as the eudaimonic components, as well as to leave room for further constructs of happiness to emerge. Furthermore, both the cognitive as well as affect aspects of the hedonic component should be taken into account. I will return to the benefits of this in the concluding chapter.

9.3 Are participants happy?

One of the questions that I asked participants was whether they were happy. The participants responses varied from being happy, to not being happy, to having a partial sense of happiness. Happiness for participants also fluctuated. Two participants said that their happiness was contextual – meaning that it depends on other factors such as cultural beliefs, amongst others. Responses not only varied across the participants, but sometimes also for an individual. I have recorded the responses for the individuals in the individual interviews. This was difficult to do for the focus groups and therefore, the individual responses for the focus group participants are not recorded in the table below. However, responses from the focus group participants are included in the narratives presented below. The table below provides a quick overview of what key informants' responses were.

Table 43: Participant responses to the question, “Are you happy?”

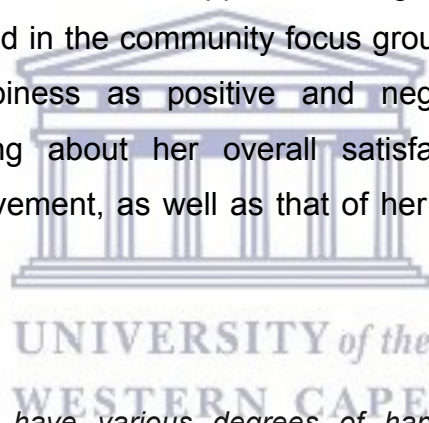
Participant	Yes	No	Partially/fluctuates	Contextual
Kefilwe	X			
Palesa	Well-being			X
Zinzi	X			X
Candice	X	X State of the nation		
Grace	X			
Mandy			Contentment	
Susan	X			
Sandra	X - work	X - Private		
Florence	X	X State of women		
Hannah	X	X - Health		
Amy	Not recorded			

As can be seen from the above table, most of the key informants indicated that they were happy. However, from the extracts below, as well as from the table above, this happiness was not always straightforward. The extracts show some of the complexities of happiness:

Grace: Am I happy? Oh God [laughter] most of the time I try to be happy, yeah, I think it is, you know, it's like at least finding those moments as I said, the bodily expression, to be appreciative and to be content, that I think could

be you know, sometimes at the end of the day, it's to say "it's been a damn crappy day", but what was really good? You know it's like little surprises that you get where, yes you were crappy this morning, but because you were crappy this morning, the day actually ended up being okay, I think I am. I tried to be happy.

In the above extract, Grace indicates that she is happy. In her explanation of this happiness, she refers however, not to the overall evaluation satisfaction with her life, but rather expresses her happiness as experienced within a day. Here, she notes that her happiness, which in effect refers to her affect, can change over the course of the day. Happiness, in this instance, is affect, which can fluctuate depending on circumstances or events during the course of the day. Similar sentiments of happiness being tied to an event or an achievement were raised in the community focus group. In the extract below, Jane speaks of happiness as positive and negative affect⁷³, whilst simultaneously speaking about her overall satisfaction and linking her happiness to her achievement, as well as that of her children (psychological well-being):



Megan: I think I have various degrees of happiness. I don't think of unhappiness and and I think I'm happy and sometimes I'm not as happy as I could be. And I don't think I'm – because you're not happy, you're sad, and I don't want to be sad. So, I'm not as happy as I could be sometimes but my children make me happy, what they achieve makes me happy, but what I achieve also makes me happy.

In the perceptions of the participants, as expressed through the quotations above, it is clear that achievement, both of the individual (self) and that of others, in particular that of her children, has an impact on affect, satisfaction of life as well as psychological well-being. In this instance, happiness for the individual, is defined in relation to others' well-being. It again speaks to the

⁷³ See Chapter Three for a discussion on affect.

inter-connectedness of well-being as discussed above. In this extract, the relationship between affect and psychological well-being (which includes personal growth) is expressed by Megan. This provides further rationale for why the different aspects of happiness should be studied in conjunction with each other (Kashdan, Biswas-Diener & King, 2008).

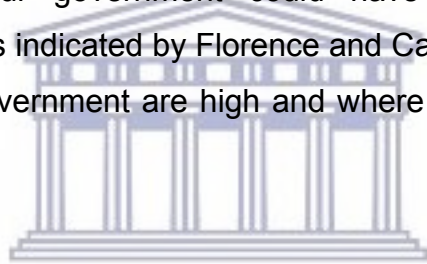
Florence and Candice expressed overall satisfaction with their lives and indicated that they were happy. However, they also indicated that there were certain things that were making them unhappy. For Florence and Candice, the state of the nation as well as the status of women were making them very unhappy:

Florence: [Laughs] most times, but not always, yeah that's how [laughs] I mean I guess one is never one thing all the time, and happiness is not a feature of your personality or a yes no thing, so I guess I would say most times I am. I live a good life, I'm comfortable, I have good networks of support, I'm fortunate to have a stable job, I get – it earns me enough money, you know, my family is healthy, yeah for the most part, but there are things that bother me. And now you know what – what's occupying me about where we are at, and the state of women in our country.

Candice: I would lean towards more yes than no, but I am not happy with the fact that we fought for so much in this country, and it's not – people have not been able to access it, and also obviously the challenge of – I – I would, I'm not happy with the state of the nation as it is, put it that way.

Candice and Florence speak from positions of being politically aware and engaged. In the extracts above, it becomes evident that their happiness is framed not only as an individual trait, as often characterised by neoliberal capital states, but that happiness is also a political imperative (and as argued by Braidotti, 2006). The imperative in this instance is related to social

injustice. Candice and Florence express unhappiness, dissatisfaction and discomfort with the social injustices that they see in the country, and how these injustices impact on women. Their discontent has to be seen in the context of a post-apartheid state, where lives were lost in the pursuit of freedom and democracy. The expectations that a democratic and just society would dismantle and disrupt the injustices of the past has not materialised for Candice and Florence. Thus, whilst they express happiness (in their personal lives) they are, at a political or ideological level, not happy. Some explanation can be found in various studies that have looked at the role that government has on happiness (Bok, 2010; Frey & Stutzer, 2002a; see World Happiness Reports). The aspects of government that could impact on happiness include levels of individual freedom, corruption, economic freedom, etc. Bok (2010) and Frey and Stutzer (2002a) thus provide evidence that satisfaction or dissatisfaction with your government could have an impact on one's subjective happiness, as indicated by Florence and Candice, especially where your expectations of government are high and where these expectations are not met.



Happiness can change over time. As indicated in Chapter Three, proponents of the set point theories (Easterlin, 2003) argue that individuals have a set point of happiness. They argue that after a period of time, one's happiness returns to a particular set point and that you adapt to your circumstances. However, this theory is proven false in the case of Sandra. In the narrative below, she indicates that she was happy, and that she was much happier at the time of the interview than she had been when she was younger. She indicated that when she was younger, she was often ill and depressed and had considered suicide. At the time of the interview, she indicated that she was very happy with her work, however, she was unhappy in her personal life and specifically in her relationship with her partner, as she has to justify her work to him, and as he does not regard her as an equal:

Sandra: But if I'm honest, no, I'm happy doing the things – the gender things that I'm doing, the work that I'm doing, I'm happy in school, I'm getting there with the kids, I'm working very hard, I portray all the love.

She goes further and states:

Because I'm still seeking that happiness for myself, happy doing the things, but I'm not there yet because in my own personal life I'm not there yet. I'm having problems or difficulties relating this inner happiness to my husband [...] I'm trying to get him to understand equality, I'm trying to get him to a point where he will give me – he – not society, he will give me the same opportunity that he has.

Sandra makes reference to two important aspects in the extracts above. The one relates to the importance of gender equality in relation to her happiness, and the other relates to her inter-personal relationship with her husband, as a source/domain of (un)happiness, precisely because it is not an equal relationship. Gender equality is essential for women's endeavours toward a just society (Sen, 1995). For Sandra, inequality in the home signifies an unjust relationship. This inequality in the relationship will certainly impact on Sandra's ability to achieve her capabilities. As argued by Robeyns (2008), social aspects (including family, marriage, sexism) all impact on an individual's ability to make use of resources and convert them into capabilities. Sandra, as she clearly articulates in the above, is unable to be happy in her personal life and achieve well-being, due to the inequalities that she faces in her marriage.

Whilst some of the participants indicated that overall, they were happy, one participant in the community focus group, Liz, indicated that she was not

happy. However, at times, she experienced some happiness through her children's achievements:

Liz: I haven't had much happiness, mostly yes, the only happiness I can recall is with my children, they used to make me happy, when I'm proud of their achievements and the things that they do; that makes me happy. But I don't have much that has made me happy, but that is what I – how I want happiness to feel, is when they make me proud, that is the happiness that I want.

Liz's happiness is clearly tied to that of her children's achievements. Studies have shown various results of the impact of children or parenting on happiness. Some studies have indicated that couples without children are just as happy as couples with children (see Bok, 2010). The research is thus not clear whether having children increases happiness or not (Bok, 2010). As per the report of Liz, her happiness increases with her children's achievement, which is supported by research, notably research in the field of care. Care work, including the care of the elderly, children and ill persons, as well as housework, have conventionally been assigned as the work of women, wives and mothers (Connell, 1987; Esplen, 2009). Femininity has been attached to this role as caregiver, both physical and emotional, and performance of these roles marks women as successful women or womanly (Connell, 1987). Liz's happiness thus speaks to hegemonic notions of femininity which are linked to the well-being (and achievements) of others, notably to that of their family. I return to women's well-being as being linked to that of others in section 9.4.

The data from this study is interesting when compared to the findings of the Gallup World Poll (as seen in the World Happiness Report). In the World Happiness Report, South African ranks 101 out of 155 countries in relation to happiness, with a reported mean of 4.829. This is lower than the world mean of 5.310 but higher than the mean for sub-Saharan Africa of 4.292 (Helliwell,

Huang & Wang, 2017). South Africans are thus less happy with the overall life evaluations when compared to the global mean, but are more happy when compared to compatriots in sub-Saharan Africa. As argued by Møller, Roberts, Tilioune and Loschky (2017), Africa's generally lower life evaluations can perhaps be explained by the people of Africa's disappointment with developments under democracy. The expectations that democracy would bring about a change in life circumstances have thus not been fulfilled. This finding resonates with the disappointment and unhappiness expressed by Florence and Candice in my study.

9.4 Domains of (un)happiness

I had not asked participants in the interviews what makes them happy. As indicated above, I had asked them what happiness means to them. However, a number of participants had articulated what makes them happy and unhappy. In the preceding section, some of reasons for their (un)happiness were discussed. However, in this section, I will present and discuss those domains or areas that makes them happy and in some instances, unhappy more comprehensively.

9.4.1 Relationships

Close relationships with family or friends, from whom individuals receive social support, are positively associated with happiness. In societies such as South Africa, which holds normative assumptions about femininity, femininity is strongly attached to relationships and family, which women are meant to uphold. Family and familial like relations, in some instances, though not always, are important for people's security, livelihood, support and solidarity (Razavi, 2011). Embeddedness in these social relations can be a source of identity for women (and men) (Razavi, 2011). This embeddedness and social connection emerged as a strong theme in this study and, as I have already

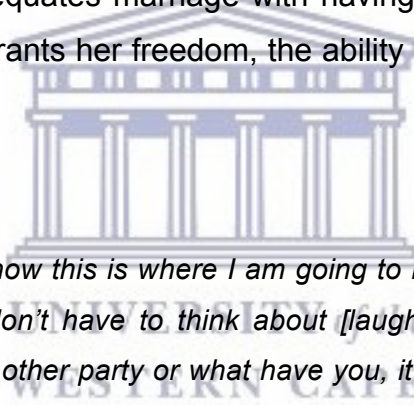
discussed above, a number of participants mentioned that their family, children or friends were a source of happiness to them. Some participants narrated that their happiness was linked to children being happy, or that they felt a sense of happiness when their children achieved, or sadness, as in the case of Palesa, when she thinks about the difficulties that her child endures:

Palesa: [...] because you know, there's there are moments of happiness, moments of joy, but within my experience there are moments of sadness, you know. I have a son, for instance, who has learning challenges, he is 30 years old, and err it is an aspect of my life that that I find very challenging, that is making me, it doesn't bring joy to my life because I think about him and it makes me sad when I see what he has to go through and [...] some of that is passed on to me.

A number of studies have demonstrated that interpersonal relations with amongst others family, friends and work colleagues are positively related to happiness (Diener et al., 2000; Frey & Stutzer, 2002a; Helliwell, Huang & Wang, 2017; Stutzer & Frey, 2006). However, studies which look at the relationship between subjective well-being and children show that having children does not necessarily increase subjective well-being, and can in fact decrease subjective well-being for women, especially in instances where there are younger children in the household (Nomaguchi & Milkie, 2003; Posel & Casale, 2015). In South Africa, looking at the National Income Dynamic Study (NIDS) data, Posel and Casale (2015) found that younger children in the household were negatively correlated with women's overall life satisfaction. This is most likely the case as the care responsibilities for younger children are mostly the concern of women (Posel & Casale, 2015). This would explain Palesa's sadness as the care for her son, who experiences learning difficulties, is challenging for her. Having a child with learning difficulties not only impacts on Palesa's affective state, but would undoubtedly also impact on her psychological well-being as well. Posel and Casale (2015) further found that older children increase the subjective well-

being of women. This supports the narrative of Liz above, who finds happiness in the achievements of her children. Liz's happiness, as integrally linked to her children and their achievements, conforms to hegemonic notions of idealised motherhood and femininity, where normative assumptions of women as mothers prevail and which embody care, nurturance and morality (Razavi, 2011).

Heteronormative gender regimes place pressure on women to have heterosexual marriages, with value placed on nuclear families. Despite these pressures, being unmarried can be the reason for freedom and for happiness. As indicated by Kefilwe, she is unmarried and sees this as the reason for her happiness. This is in direct opposition to heteronormative gender regimes. In the extract below, she equates marriage with having to account to someone else. Being unmarried grants her freedom, the ability to decide for herself and agency:



Kefilwe: Probably now this is where I am going to be very controversial, I am not married so I don't have to think about [laughter], I don't have to think about pleasing the other party or what have you, it's just me and my son and err ja, I'm able to take my own decisions at a particular point when I want to..

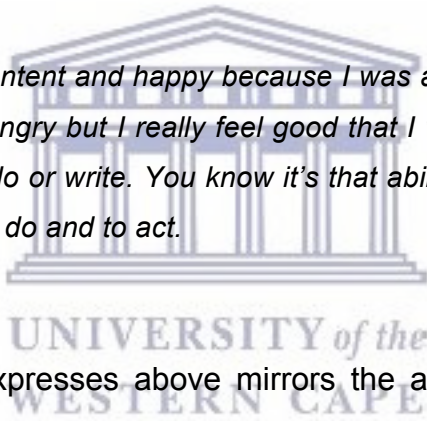
Kefilwe draws on feminist critiques of normative heterosexual relations. Some feminists have argued that women often make strategic choices, such as not being in heterosexual relationships, to enhance their well-being or those of others (Chant, 2008). Whilst Kefilwe does not identify as a feminist, she works in an organisation that focuses on gender equality and gender rights. Given her positionality, she is thus able to draw on feminist critiques especially as heterosexual normative relations can be a site of gender inequality. Kefilwe suggests that marriage may place certain restrictions on one and thus impact negatively on happiness. Kefilwe's narrative starts pointing to the relationship between gender equality and happiness and indeed in her experience, there

is a relationship between freedom, agency, gender equality and happiness: where you have freedom, agency, gender equality, you will experience happiness. I return to the links between gender equality and happiness in section 9.5.

Several scholars have argued the opposite to this. Scholars have indicated that married people report higher levels of subjective well-being or happiness than individuals who are not married (Diener, Gohn, Suh & Oishi, 2000; Stutzer & Frey, 2006). However, within marriage, as reported in a study done by Posel and Casale (2015), there is a substantial difference in the levels of satisfaction reported by men and women within couples. Only a third of the married or cohabiting men and women report similar levels of life satisfaction, whilst in 16% of the couples women reported subjective well-being that was lower than men's (they reported 2 levels lower than men), and in 17% of the couples, women reported subjective well-being that was at least two levels higher than men's (Posel & Casale, 2015). The differences in life satisfaction were linked to men's and women's roles and responsibilities within the household. Women's subjective well-being was negatively correlated to having young children in the household (meaning, women were less likely to be satisfied where there were younger children in the household), while there was a positive correlation with having piped water in the household. This finding shows how the burden of housework and care responsibilities are most times the responsibility of women, and thus impacts on their subjective well-being. However, this is not true for all women, and an intersectional lens best assists us in understanding the burden of housework and care. It is often poor, black women who carry the burden of housework and care giving, as middle- and upper-class women are often able to outsource housework as well as care responsibilities. Research has also found that where people were in a marriage that they assessed as being of poor quality, they were less happy than single people (Layard, Clark, & Senik, 2012). Layard, Clark and Senik (2012) have also found that where couples have divorced, their life satisfaction increased after the separation, as compared to the three years preceding separation.

9.4.2 Freedom, agency, voice

Some participants spoke about happiness as related to being free, having agency and voice. This sub-theme overlaps with the discussion in Chapter Six on gender equality, as some participants related agency and voice with gender equality. In the extracts below, participants who were key informants, and given their positionality as gender experts and activists, drew on political and feminist narratives in talking about happiness. This speaks to their experiences and the importance they accord to the ideal of gender equality (and a sense of its legitimacy as a goal in South Africa) and its links to happiness. Participants' narratives point to the link between gender equality and happiness:



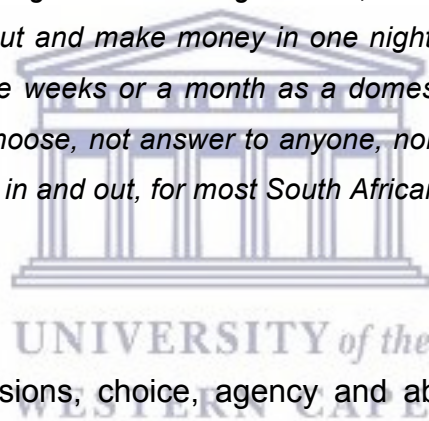
Grace: [...] I am content and happy because I was able to speak out, and I'm still feeling damn angry but I really feel good that I was able to – that I could say and speak or do or write. You know it's that ability, that freedom to – you know, to be able to do and to act.

The view that Grace expresses above mirrors the argument made by Sen (1999, 2009) and Robeyns (2003) that freedom and capabilities are integrally linked. As stated by Grace, her freedom is directly related to what she is able to do and how she is able to act. This is supported by Sen (1999, 2009) who has argued that freedom is necessary and helps advance the capabilities of an individual person. As further observed in the World Happiness Reports (see World Happiness Report 2012), freedom to make choices is an important element contributing to overall life satisfaction or happiness of individuals.

In the interview with Susan, she drew on her experiences and work in an NGO that organises sex workers to argue that sex workers have agency. In her narrative she stated that sex workers experienced gender inequality daily. However, she narrated that sex workers (perhaps some sex workers, as sex

workers are not a homogenous group) have agency and are empowered as they are able to make their own choices, and as some have the necessary material resources. She juxtaposes the levels of agency that sex workers have as compared to abused women, whom she came into contact with in her work at an NGO working with women who had suffered abuse:

Susan: But like I said there is a lot of, actually in my work at SWEAT, in comparison to my work at People Opposing Women Abuse, for instance, erm, there is a much higher level of agency and sense of empowerment amongst sex workers. And I think, I've had to think about this and I think it's because, when you are a sex worker, you work for yourself, and you earn more money than you do as a domestic worker or other work that you are qualified to do or might be able to get. Errm, and so access to resources, being able to go out and make money in one night, more than you would in two weeks or three weeks or a month as a domestic worker, be able to go home when you choose, not answer to anyone, nobody tells you what to do, nobody clocks you in and out, for most South African women, that's a, that's a pretty big luxury.



Freedom to make decisions, choice, agency and absolute income⁷⁴ are all factors that impact on happiness (Nussbaum, 1999; Seligman, 2002; Sen, 1999, 2000). Susan uses the example of sex workers, who are a group of women who are in many ways disempowered – as they are usually poor, stigmatised in society and experience physical and emotional abuse, often at the hands of law enforcement agents – but have agency and freedom and can make choices. Notwithstanding all the challenges that link gender and other inequalities and injustices that sex workers face, Susan argues that they have a level of agency, freedom as well as income that bring happiness and that mediates the social, gender inequalities and injustices that they face.

⁷⁴ As argued in Chapter 3, happiness does not necessary increase when income increases. However, absolute income does appear to have an effect on happiness for people living below the poverty line (Kingston & Knight, 2007).

9.4.3 Religion

Religion was mentioned by some participants as a source of happiness, as a space where they are able to forget the hardships of their everyday lives. Other participants noted with scepticism that religion is a resource which people use to convince themselves that they are happy, when in effect, they experience a number of hardships. Religion can thus be used to rationalise injustices and inequalities:

Randy (FG Community): If I can comment on the spiritual side of happiness, it's when you're in church and you just give everyone – you just gaan bos⁷⁵ and that is what – in that manner and in that space and your communication, whatever you feel, I think that is the most powerful happiness that you can experience in life, it's when you are spiritually happy.[...] This is where my happiness lies.

Jean (FG Church): Freedom of religion, number one, Because I can pray and I can read the Bible when and where ever. So freedom of religion is happiness in my life.

Nussbaum (2003) has identified religious affiliation as an important component of the capability: senses, imagine and thought. Women (who so choose) should have the opportunity to be able to practice their religion. The focus is thus on the opportunity or the capability. Women's capabilities could be thwarted should they not be able to affiliate religiously in instances where they desire to affiliate religiously. Clearly for Randy and Jean above, their ability to practice their religion provides them with a sense of happiness. Frey and Stutzer (2002a) have argued that religion and happiness are positively related, although the effect is not large⁷⁶. They offer a variety of reasons why

⁷⁵ Afrikaans term which means that 'you go wild'.

⁷⁶ Others, such as du Toit, Wissing and Khumalo (2014) have made a distinction between intrinsic religious orientation (which allows the individual to harness their spiritual growth

religion increases happiness. This includes that the church offers a supportive community, it offers a sense of meaning and purpose, and believers are better able to cope with adverse situations if they attribute the bad event to the will of God (Frey & Stutzer, 2002a). Whilst Layard, Clark and Senik (2012) have argued that there is no difference in life satisfaction between countries that are more or less religious, they have shown that religion serves to protect individuals against hardship. It is this latter point that could also serve to hold women in positions of subordination and servitude, which is what Candice and Hannah believe. For Candice and Hannah, religion disempowers women and provides them with a false belief that adverse events are meant to be and cannot be challenged:

Candice: [...] but I also think that religion is this vehicle that – it's this – well I'm not religious, I'm an atheist, and I think religious is this drug that convinces people that they are happy and it actually prevents people from taking up issues and challenging issues that they should be challenging.

Hannah: I'm thinking for instance of the fundamentalist Christians that I knew at university, and I'm not necessarily having a go at Christians, fundamentalist generally who were so certain of their place in life and of the rules in life; every problem could be solved by a bible verse [...] and especially in terms of gender, you know I'm thinking of, you know, the people who really used to preach the whole gospel of, you know, "wives be submissive to your husbands", you know, and you were promised that if you did this, you would have the radiantly happy marriages and your husband would adore you and cherish you. It didn't work like that.

The views held by Candice and Hannah that religion and religious institutions are patriarchal are borne out by feminist scholars (Epstein, 2007; Walby,

through religion) and extrinsic religious orientation (where individuals use religion to access other things such as social support, security, and so on) and have argued that intrinsic religious orientations are always positively associated with well-being, whilst extrinsic religious orientation is not always associated with well-being.

1990). Walby (1990) has argued that patriarchal practices and beliefs are central to religion, and serve to justify men's continued domination of women, whilst Epstein (2007) has argued that religion is often used to legitimise women's subordination to men as natural. Religion, it is argued, thus continues to subject women to positions of subordination. However, recent feminist scholarship on gender and religion have argued for a more intersectional approach to studying gender and religion (see Avishai, Jafar, & Rinaldo, 2015). New feminist scholarship in this field has also argued that women are agentic even in religious institutions which are male-centred and patriarchal (Avishai, Jafar, & Rinaldo, 2015; Mahmood, 2001). Agency need not only be defined as resistance (as in liberal feminist scholarship), but as Mahmood has posited, agency can also be understood as "the capacity to realise one's own interests against the weight of custom, tradition, transcendental will, or other obstacles (whether individual or collective)" (Mahmood, 2001, p.206).



9.4.4 Work

Work has been shown to be one of the domains that contributes to happiness. But once you have a job, it is also the quality of the work that is important for satisfaction. The importance of work and its relation to happiness was expressed by some participants in the study. Some participants noted that their work makes them happy and it provides meaning, as they feel that they are making a contribution and have a social connection with their colleagues:

Susan: Errm, ja, erm, ja my work does make me happy, feeling like I can make a contribution makes me happy and erm connecting with [...] everybody. In fact working at SWEAT made me happy because erm, I feel more connected to everyone.

Research on work and happiness supports the findings of this study. Seligman (2002) notes that having a gratifying job sets one well on the way to well-being. The finding of this study is further supported by Layard et al. (2012), who showed that work provides people with a sense of livelihood and meaning. Work further provides people with a sense of identity, social networks and promotes self-esteem, in instances where job satisfaction is experienced (Winkelmann & Winkelmann, 1998). Job satisfaction is thus positively related to overall life satisfaction and meaning (Wissing & van Eeden, 2014). In addition to the satisfaction that work brings, we see a re-emergence of the narrative of inter-connectedness that was discussed earlier. Again, happiness is described as the connections made with others.

9.4.5 Health

This sub-theme speaks to both mental health as well as physical health and their importance to happiness. A number of participants indicated that being healthy was an important aspect of one's happiness. They also indicated that health was a source of their unhappiness, especially when they experienced health problems. In the extract below, Sandra makes the connection between her physical health and her happiness. When she experienced physical health problems, she was not happy. She also refers to her mental health and how this was linked to her not being happy:

Sandra: I believe, if you are blessed with good health. I think all these things are interlinked to happiness. Again, for myself I feel that there was a time that I was nearly dying; I had high blood pressure because of what? Because of stress, because of unhappiness, I had many challenges, without being too personal, but I had many challenges early in my life, at a very early stage; 22, 23, 24 years old, I nearly tried – or I did try to commit suicide, I came out stronger in the end.

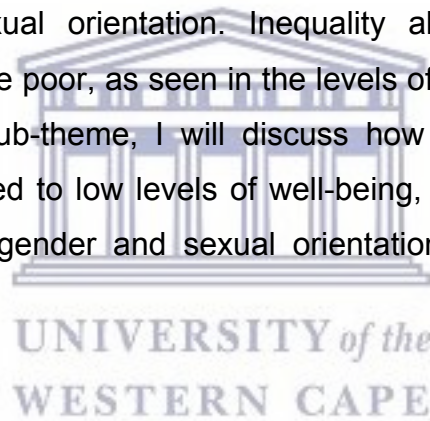
Various research supports the view articulated by Sandra above (Frey & Stutzer, 2002a; Graham, C., 2009; Layard, Clark, & Senik, 2012; Seligman, 2002) that both mental as well as physical health is linked to happiness. However, it is one's subjective assessment of our health that matters more than the objective assessment of our health (Frey & Stutzer, 2002a; Seligman, 2002). Scholars (Frey & Stutzer, 2002a; Graham, 2009; Layard, Clark, & Senik, 2012) have argued that the link between health and happiness is most likely attributed to personality traits or other unobservable characteristics. It is also argued that there is a reverse relationship between health and happiness (Layard, Clark, & Senik, 2012). Whilst happy people tend to be more healthy in later years, medical practitioners have also found that low well-being scores are positively correlated to health ailments such as heart disease, strokes, suicide, amongst others (Layard, Clark, & Senik, 2012). The relationship between health and happiness is a complex one. Sandra's narrative is best located within an intersectional framework, recognising her locatedness as a coloured female from a working class community. Whilst in South Africa, the Department of Health in its Draft Mental Health Framework notes that there is no difference between races and mental health disorders, we do know that mental health disorders are linked to social determinants such as poverty and violence, amongst others, and that there are gender differences in the presentation of mental health disorders (Republic of South Africa, 2013). It is furthermore imperative to recognise the trauma, abuse and violence of our colonial as well as apartheid past. As argued in Chapter Three, bodily health is an important aspect that should be taken into account when looking at what women's capabilities are and what women are able to achieve. Sandra's health is thus related to her happiness and what she is able to achieve.

For the most part the domains discussed above were spoken about positively, as areas resulting in happiness for participants. This is with the exception of marriage. In the next few paragraphs, I turn to those factors that cause unhappiness or discord for the participants in the study. These areas are inequality, including racial and gender discrimination and matters related to

poverty, as well as discord with regards to the state of politics in the country. Whilst in the section above, participants had spoken about the domains as areas which resulted in their happiness and sometimes caused unhappiness, I argue in the section below that participants perceive inequality and the politics of the country as *actively working against their happiness*. Inequality and the current politics of South Africa were seen as unjust by some participants in the study, and they thus experience a level of cognitive dissonance.

9.4.6 Inequality

In this study, the sub-theme inequality refers to discrimination on the basis of race, gender and sexual orientation. Inequality also includes the gaps between the rich and the poor, as seen in the levels of poverty experienced in South Africa. In this sub-theme, I will discuss how income inequality and poverty are clearly linked to low levels of well-being, and how discrimination on the basis of race, gender and sexual orientation impact negatively on happiness.



In the interview with Kefilwe, she refers specifically to the work that her organisation does in the Northern Cape⁷⁷ and the levels of poverty seen in the Northern Cape. She indicates that as a result of poverty and because many people do not have money to provide for their basic needs, including food, they resort to extreme measures, including prostituting their children, for money in order to provide for their basic needs:

Kefilwe: [...] Errm, when you look at errm, when you look at err poverty as well, sometimes it's not it's not you know you can't pinpoint gender err per se, but I think those are still sort of gender, there are still some gendered aspects that come out from such things, where you find that err I'm a grandmother,

⁷⁷ The Northern Cape is one of South Africa's nine provinces.

I'm at home and I live with my grandkids and my my daughter is gone to work somewhere or whatever and then I want a means of livelihood. You know that there are families that end up err selling their own little kids to these old men and what have you. [...] So I still think yes, there is, there is a a connection, you know, there are specific things that that come up that you can see that if maybe we had a more equal society, if we had a a society where opportunities were there for everyone, errm I don't have to sit here, a family doesn't have to sit and see and wait for an old man that comes and says, if you allow me to marry this kid, errm I will actually school the kid for you and I will also have given you some money and what have you [...] So I I do think to a greater extent, if ever we had a more equal society, we'd probably be much happier and some of the social ills that we are seeing now upon us, could probably be minimised.

Kefilwe's observation about poverty in the Northern Cape is borne out by official statistics. Poverty is rife in the Northern Cape. The Quarterly Labour Force Survey for the 2nd quarter of 2017 indicates that the unemployment rate for the Northern Cape was 30.5% (Statistics South Africa, 2017c). This means that nearly 1 in 3 people in the Northern Cape is unemployed. The 2014 Statistics South Africa Vulnerability Report indicated that for the Northern Cape the female unemployment rate was 30.9% for women between the ages of 15–64 years of age. The Report further indicates that of the female headed households, 28.7% did not have any employed person in the household.

Whilst Kefilwe seems uncertain whether poverty is gendered, we know from the discussions in Chapter Four that poverty is indeed gendered and raced. We also see the gender aspect of poverty reflected in the statistics provided above. The conditions in the Northern Cape continue to reflect the effects of colonialism as well as apartheid. Whilst more than half of the employed female population in the Northern Cape are employed in the formal sector (63.7%), significant numbers are employed as domestic workers (19.3%), the informal sector (12.5%) and in agriculture (4.5%) (Statistics South Africa, 2014).

Poverty impacts on the achievement of a number of capabilities listed by Nussbaum (2003). Poverty affects the bodily health of a person as they are not well nourished and often lack food and the basic necessities. As expressed by Kefilwe, violence against young girls and women affects the bodily integrity of women and young girls. As children are often taken out of school prematurely due to poverty, their levels of education are low, impacting on the capability of senses, imagination and reason. If the basic needs of poor people were not being met, to what extent would they be able to critically reflect upon their lives and plan their life? The chances of this would be slim, as the basic needs need to be met first and foremost. Poverty and inequality thus results in people not being able to achieve that which they value and want to achieve, and impacts on their happiness.

Using Fraser's (2005) trivalent view of justice, we see that poor people will not be able to participate equally (participatory parity) with their peers in society based on economic injustices. Fraser refers to this as distributive injustices or the maldistribution of resources. Only once resources are redistributed will economic justice be restored. Wilkinson and Pickett (2009) have further argued that income inequality has the greatest impact on the poor. Not only does it affect the generation living in poverty but also it continues to affect generations to come. Addressing inequality and poverty, as argued by Wilkinson and Pickett (2009), is very important for well-being as inequality is related to a number of psycho-social problems.

In the following extracts, both Sandra and Palesa speak to the matter of discrimination, whether on the basis of race, gender or sexual orientation, and how this has impacted on happiness, or as Palesa prefers, well-being:

Sandra: I spoke to you about even in schools we've had one person, I'm giving you another example we've had an educator resigning at a very early age because this person was stigmatized, this person was seen to have

relationships with boys, it was a guy, it was not the truth! It was not the truth, yes his sexual orientation is different to us, but that gave nobody the right to label this person and to like chuck him out of our little enclosed circle, and in the end his happiness was what he was looking for, and he was not happy where he was. So you see, the two added up, because there was inequality, they didn't give him a chance, he never got a promotion, he was not in this enclosed circle people tend to put you in, and it's very cold out there and you become unhappy.

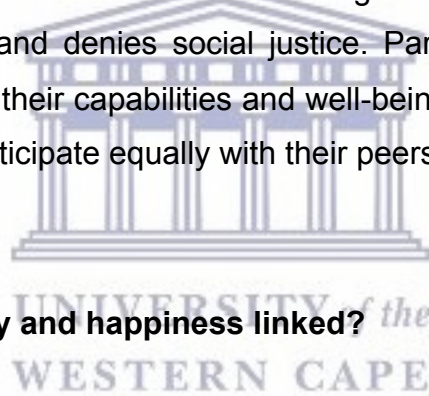
Palesa, in her extract, notes the manner in which she was being discriminated against in her workplace by a manager of hers, who was a black male traditionalist:

Palesa: Yes, yes, that's the way that I was experiencing him. So I decided that, this is making it difficult for me to to work. This idea of being treated as a subordinate. Because I was a subordinate, but I was a lower subordinate in relation to white women, as well as in relation to coloured women, because the Commission was racially mixed. And this was all coming from him as a CEO in terms of you know, managing my portfolio, getting resources and getting authorisation for work and so on and so forth. So that was definitely an issue of gender inequality.

Fraser's (1995, 1998, 2000, 2005) work on social justice and concept of participatory parity are useful in understanding the above extracts. In both extracts above, we clearly see that Palesa and Sandra's colleague was not able to participate equally based on sexual orientation, gender and racial discrimination. This ties in with Fraser's second dimension of justice, that of the cultural, where she argues that people can be prevented or denied participatory parity due to them being devalued, treated as inferior or as subordinate. This clearly is the case for Palesa above, where she was denied the opportunity to participate equally based on her gender as well as her race. She was thus further denied fulfilling her capabilities and achieving the best

that she can be. Sandra's colleague was also treated as inferior and not recognized by others based on his sexual orientation. Social justice in these instances was denied to both Palesa and Sandra's colleague.

In the above section, I looked at those domains named by participants which impact on their happiness. These domains are relationships; freedom of choice, agency and voice; religion; social engagement; work and health. The literature shows that happiness is not only a result of external factors, but also a result of personal factors. Looking at the findings of this study, participants mentioned external factors that impacted on their happiness, which include work, religion, social engagement and freedom. The personal factors include health, which entails both mental and physical health, and relationships, which include marriage and children. From the findings it is clear that inequality impacts on happiness and denies social justice. Participants spoke of how inequalities have stifled their capabilities and well-being as well as their ability or others' abilities to participate equally with their peers.

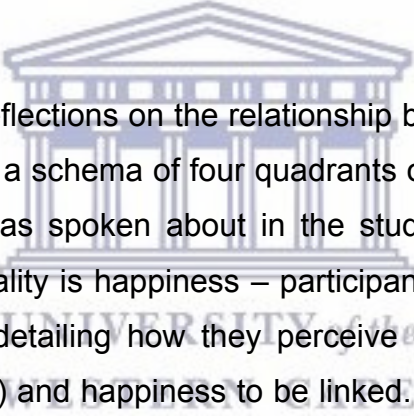


9.5 Are gender equality and happiness linked?

There are very few studies that look at the relationship between gender equality and happiness or well-being or life satisfaction. Studies on happiness tend to report on gender as a variable. In other words, the studies would look at reported life satisfaction for women and men, amongst other demographics such as marital status, education and income (see Frey & Stutzer, 2002a; Giusta, Jewell & Kambhampati, 2011; Posel & Casale, 2015). As indicated in Chapter One, I have drawn on three articles that focus on gender equality and happiness to analyse the findings of this study. These are the studies by Stevenson and Wolfers (2009), Mencarini and Sironi (2012) and Holter (2014). As further indicated in Chapter One, all three studies are quantitative and thus the findings are generalizable. However, the studies do not offer the

nuances that qualitative studies would offer and which serves as a rationale for my study.

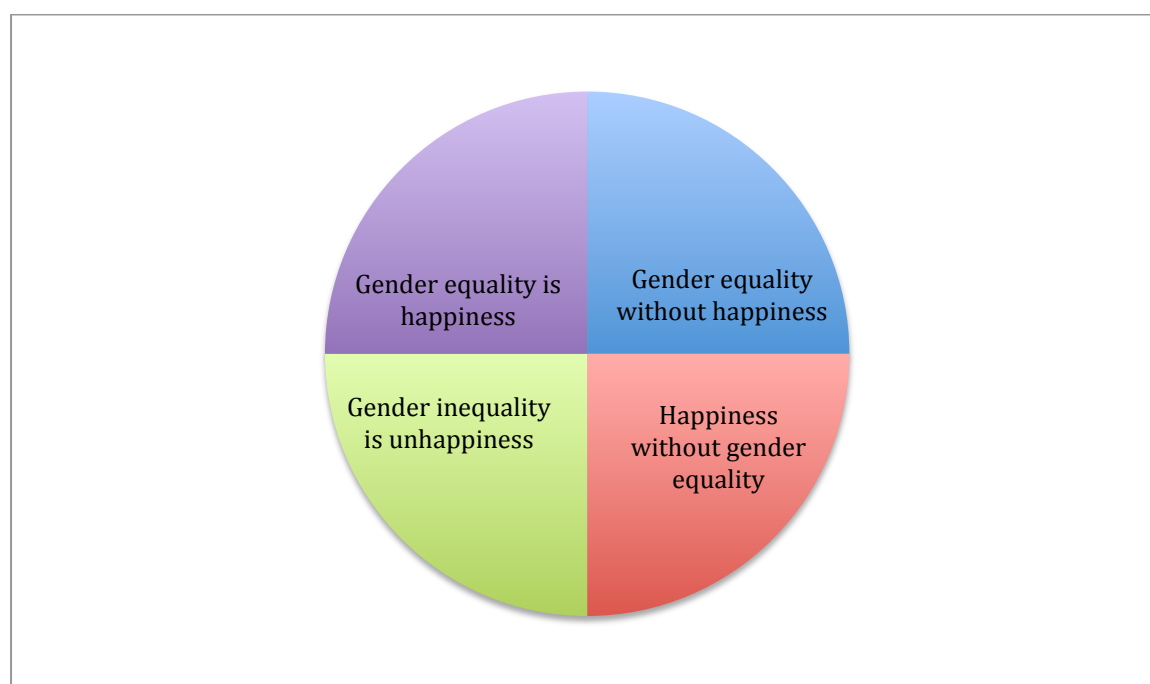
In this section, I will present the findings on whether, in the participants' imaginaries, there is a perceived link between gender equality and happiness. In the above sections, this link has already been alluded to. However, in this section, I turn to their specific narratives in a more succinct and systematic manner. In the interviews, I asked participants whether there is a link between gender equality and happiness, and whether one can have the one without the other. The responses indicated a complex and nuanced relationship between gender equality and happiness. For most of the participants, however, there was a link.



Based on participants' reflections on the relationship between gender equality and happiness, I identify a schema of four quadrants or dimensions of gender equality and happiness as spoken about in the study. In the first quadrant discussed – Gender Equality is happiness – participants draw on political and feminist frameworks in detailing how they perceive gender equality (or the ideals of gender equality) and happiness to be linked. In the second quadrant – Gender equality without happiness – participants narrate how gender equal opportunities have been more available to them, but given that gender regimes have not changed and they continue to face gender injustices, they are unhappy. The third quadrant – Happiness without gender equality – discusses how women could be in unequal gender relations, most often in the private sphere, yet be happy. This happiness speaks to women's 'acceptance' of normative gender roles in a society, which places value on and defines femininity in terms of their roles as mothers, house-maker and those responsible for the well-being (emotional and physical) of others. The last quadrant – Gender inequality is unhappiness – argues that in participants' views, the gender equality project is essential to happiness, and thus that gender inequality equates to unhappiness.

This schema of four quadrants are depicted in the Figure 6 below:

Figure 6: Quadrants of perceived relationship between gender equality and happiness



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As can be seen from Figure 6, in some instances it is possible to have gender equality without happiness and happiness without gender equality. The ideal, I would argue, is that we have gender equality and happiness. As will also be seen from the findings, a small number of the participants had a concern linking gender equality and happiness. I conclude this chapter by looking at participants' concerns with linking gender equality and happiness.

9.5.1 Gender equality is happiness

Most of the participants indicated that gender equality and happiness are linked. Gender equality is a social good and is necessary for a socially just society. Some of the participants were of the opinion that not only is gender

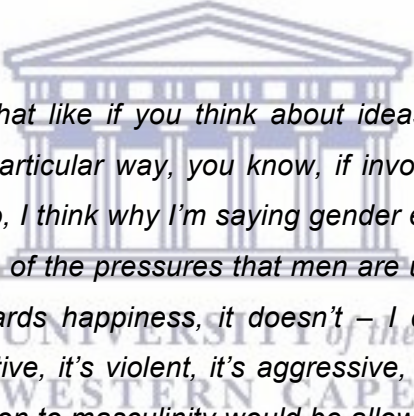
equality and happiness linked, but that gender equality is integral to happiness:

Florence: I think it's very importantly linked because if you think about gender equality as full participation as an active citizen and having your contributions recognized, you know, I mean it's – I guess, I probably need to flesh it out but it's like a no-brainer in a sense. You know that's what every – I think that's what every person, I mean it sounds a bit ridiculous to generalize but what every person would want. When I think of gender equality I guess at the level of relationships, I could say, as an example, another example, that of course I think in relationships where there is equal participation of both partners to – in whichever way they structure that, to household chores, to family life, life as a family together, whether it's with kids or without kids, that it should make for high levels of satisfaction. So, yeah I think it's integral to happiness.

In the above extract, Florence makes reference to how gender equality would lead to life satisfaction and happiness. Having more equal relationships and further to that, addressing normative gender roles, practices and patriarchy, will lead to more egalitarian relationships between men and women. It is important to point out that Florence mentions gender equality within the household or family or inter-personal relationships, as well as gender equality in society in general or gender equality at a country level. Perceived gender equality at the macro and micro levels is thus linked to happiness at an individual level. Similar findings are evident in the study by Mencarini and Sironi (2012). Looking at the division of labour within the household (as a measure of gender inequality) they found that where working women (women working more than 30 hours per week) performed large amounts of housework in addition to their paid work, this impacted negatively on their happiness. In other words, increased housework as an indicator of gender inequality, impacted on women's happiness. As gender equality in the household increased, so did women's happiness. The study further shows that there was no apparent difference in happiness levels between women who worked exclusively in the home and those working less than 30 hours a

week. As I have discussed in Chapter Six, whilst women's participation in the formal economy has increased, this has not resulted in the increase in the equal sharing of work between men and women within the household. Women thus experience the dual burden of participation in the formal economy and housework (Mencarini & Sironi, 2012). The dual burden that women experience leads to a decrease in overall happiness, which outweighs the effect that job satisfaction has on women's happiness (Mencarini & Sironi, 2012).

Egalitarian relations are beneficial to women but also to men. In the study, Kefilwe, as well as Florence, make the argument that gender equality will improve men's well-being:

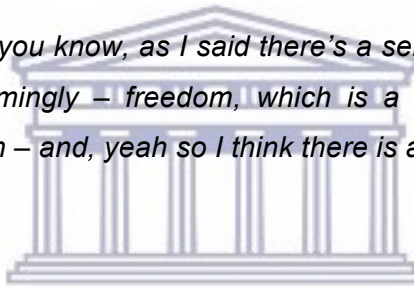


Florence: I mean that like if you think about ideas around masculinity that men should be a particular way, you know, if involves like aggression, or a form of violence. So, I think why I'm saying gender equality would be good for men too is because of the pressures that men are under to be particular kind of men is not towards happiness, it doesn't – I don't think it makes men happy. It's competitive, it's violent, it's aggressive, so that I think if the – for me equality in relation to masculinity would be allowing for more diverse ways of being men, so that if you don't play sport or if you want to do ballet or whatever you don't get bullied or ostracised. So, I think that – for me that would be – and that would be towards happiness, that's what I mean by good for men

It is widely acknowledged that gender inequality is 'bad' and can be harmful to both men and women (see Hearn, 2007; Ratele, 2008; United Nations, 2008). Florence makes a further connection, not only between gender inequality being harmful to men, and therefore that gender equality is beneficial to men, but furthermore that gender equality leads to happiness. Holter's study (2014) provides further support for this finding. As indicated above, the study found that individuals in countries that were gender-equal were more than twice as

likely to be happy as individuals than in countries that were not that gender equal. The results also indicate that living in a gender-equal country or state “strongly increases the chances of happiness and strongly decreases the chances of depression” (Holter, 2014, p. 523).

Grace and Florence spoke in interesting ways about the link between gender equality and happiness, constructing happiness and gender equality as enmeshed in each other. Their narratives reflect the complexities and nuances between happiness and gender equality as notions that intersect, but that also are strongly connected to each other. In Chapter Seven we noted that gender equality means freedom and having a voice. In the extracts below, happiness equals freedom and voice as well:



Grace: I think it is, you know, as I said there's a sense of voice, voice, there's a sense of – seemingly – freedom, which is a sense of happiness, of a lightness I think. Uh – and, yeah so I think there is a connection definitely.

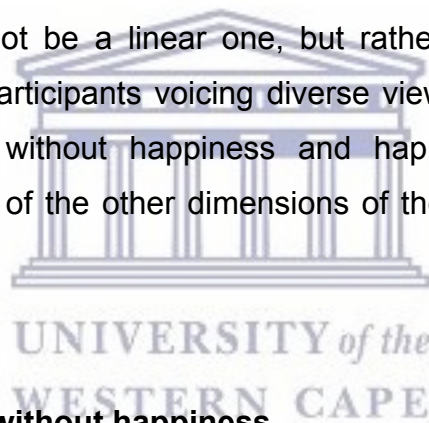
Florence: I think for me happiness means [laughs] I guess the same as gender equality. Being fully responsible for what I decide to do or not do. Making contributions in different ways but having those contributions recognized and freedom; that's the only way I can put it: it's freedom, because that's how I have been thinking about, about lack of freedom.

As noted previously, Palesa rejected the notions of gender equality and happiness. Rather, she prefers the concept of being the best that you can be as opposed to gender equality, and well-being as opposed to happiness. For Palesa being the best that one can be and well-being are linked:

Palesa: But, so, so well-being, when you are given the means to become what you can be, the best that you can be, then that bestows, a very strong sense of well-being..

Support for Palesa's views is seen in the work of Sen (1999). Sen (1999) has argued that capability (and being the best that one can be) is intrinsically linked to well-being. Well-being can thus be evaluated on the basis of the capabilities that the person has (see Chapter Two). It should be borne in mind that happiness and well-being are not one and the same for Sen (see discussion in Chapter Two). Sen has argued against the Utility approach (which sees happiness as encompassing the satisfaction that is gained from consuming goods) that happiness is an important aspect of well-being, but not the *only* aspect that is important for well-being, as economists would argue.

Participants expressed views that the relationship between gender equality and happiness might not be a linear one, but rather a complex one. This complexity is seen in participants voicing diverse views on whether you can have gender equality without happiness and happiness without gender equality, which are two of the other dimensions of the quadrant explored, in the sections below.



9.5.2 Gender equality without happiness

Can you have gender equality and not be happy? A few of the participants have argued that you can have gender equality without happiness. There are instances, which participants narrated, where this holds true. Sandra spoke about the sacrifices that women often make for the struggle for gender equality, and that this may not necessarily make you happy, as there are still societal expectations imposed on you and social relations where you are not treated as equal:

Sandra: But the sacrifices these people make, sometimes they don't speak about it, I'm being very open now, to speak about it. But you know, it does not

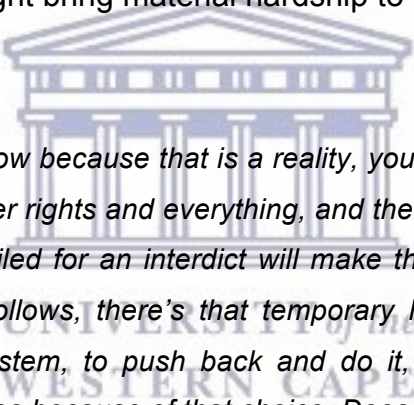
necessarily make you happy, yes you're doing the thing that makes you happy, I love what I'm doing, I'm sure that whoever is there, we had Baleka Mbete there yesterday, addressing us, and I look up to this woman and I said "yes, good man, you can stand your ground, when we watch TV we see how you handle this" I don't know, yes, it gives you that happiness in your job and in your career, but I don't know if we are quite there with that where inner side of us, that womanhood, that would love to see you giving me equal treatment. There's a different set of rules for women and there's a different set of rules for men, society imposed that. And as I said we are getting there, step by step by legislation.

Whilst gender equality may be legislated, and opportunities that were not open to women previously are now available, gender regimes have not changed, and gender injustices persist in society and in the world, which makes for unhappiness. This is the view being expressed by Sandra. Women who have thus taken up the gender equality opportunities (e.g. career opportunities), and who appear to be in gender equal relations (in the public sphere), suffer in other areas. Not because the gender opportunities are not available to women, but rather as society repeats gender injustices and unequal, normative gender regimes on multiple levels, resulting in women paying the price for taking up gender equal opportunities. Women taking up gender equal opportunities, without gender regimes and gender injustices being addressed effectively could thus be unhappy. This is an important finding when we look at how government, amongst other role-players, define and conceptualise their gender reform through legislation, policies and programmes, and the the potential impact on women of such legislation, policies and programmes.

Amy shared a similar sentiment to Sandra. She stated that you could have gender equality without happiness, for example in the workplace. Whilst legislation may be in place that benefits and empowers women, women still have to work so much harder to prove themselves. She relates this to there being insufficient consciousness-raising. Men might think it is only because

there are particular pieces of legislation and gender equality guaranteed in the constitution that women find themselves in the positions that they are, and that they do not deserve to be in those positions. So men's attitudes have not changed around gender equality or how they perceive social relations and the role of women. Women can have gender equality but women might not be happy, because they still have to work so much harder to prove themselves in their work environment, where conditions might not be good.

In the interview with Grace, she speaks of 'temporary happiness'. She notes that sometimes women may be aware of their choices and are able to exercise their choices, which I read here as women accessing gender justice, and that these choices may bring temporary happiness only. In the long term, accessing your rights might bring material hardship to women:

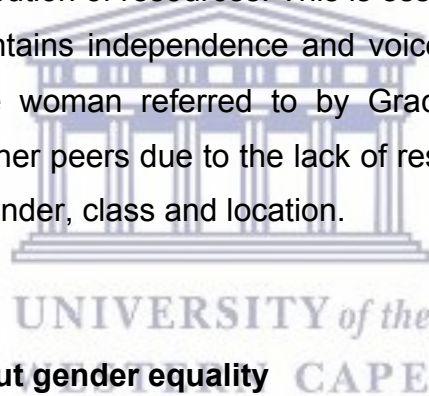


Grace: Mm, you know because that is a reality, you know so the auntie in the farm will know all her rights and everything, and then will make that choice, or the woman who's filed for an interdict will make that choice, but sometimes the situation that follows, there's that temporary happiness, that I've been able to use the system, to push back and do it, but the actually material condition deteriorates because of that choice. Does that make sense?

Gender equality and gender relations have to be understood at the micro (individual, family), meso (community) and macro (state, global) levels identified by Walby (2009). It is possible for gender equality and gender relations to be different across these three levels? Whilst gender equality may be legislated in South Africa (macro level), gender equality may not be a lived experience for many women at the micro level (as attested by the findings presented in Chapter Seven), or at the meso level. What the above extracts reflect is the incongruence in the levels of gender equality in the micro, meso and macro levels, as well as in the domain of the economy (or work). It is thus very possible, as expressed by Sandra and Amy, that one can have gender

equality at the macro level without being happy, given that commensurate levels of gender equality are not experienced at the meso level. Societal values, attitudes and expectations of women and men have not shifted towards gender equality. Thus, disjuncture between parity in the public space, the community and world of work, explains the unhappiness as expressed by Amy and Sandra.

Participatory parity is an important component of Fraser's (1998, 2005, 2007a) theory of social justice. In the extract above, Grace's narrative reflects how gender and class intersects with location to produce experiences of maldistribution. Fraser (2007a) has argued that participatory parity is only possible when two conditions are met. Foregrounded in Grace's narrative is the need for the redistribution of resources. This is essential to ensure that the individual has and maintains independence and voice when exercising their rights and choice. The woman referred to by Grace, will not be able to participate equally with her peers due to the lack of resources, but also based on the intersection of gender, class and location.



9.5.3 Happiness without gender equality

Happiness is possible without gender equality. As seen in the data, a number of participants expressed the view that women could be happy without being in gender equal relations. Participants mostly, but not exclusively, mentioned instances in the micro level (private sphere) where one could find happiness without being in gender equal relations. They indicated that some women may be happy with the normative gender roles assigned to them and that this may make them happy. This is not surprising as heteronormative societies center women's roles as mothers and wives affirming hegemonic femininity, which includes subservience to partners and family. Validations from normative gender roles may thus make them happy. Other instances where women could be happy, without experiencing gender equality, is in relations where

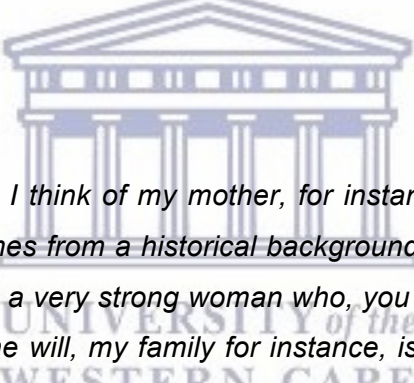
women are unequal yet exercise power and/or agency, where women are gender unaware, or where women consciously (choose) make certain sacrifices in order to be happy.

Mencarini and Sironi (2012) offer important insight into why women can be happy without being in gender equal relations. Drawing on their study on housework and happiness, they found women's perception of fairness in relation to the amount of housework being done by them was key to whether they would be happy or not. Women's perception was also linked to their context and country of residence. In countries where women were doing most of the household tasks, and where this was considered fair and normal, any sharing of the household work would decrease the negative effect of household work on happiness. However, in more egalitarian countries, where women were doing more work than the country average, women were unhappy (Mencarini & Sironi, 2012). Women doing more housework than what was perceived to be the social norm for the country were thus unhappy. I argue that the same applies to other social norms. Another important element is that of expectations. I argue that if individuals' expectations were met, they would be happy. Jane's narrative below reflects the elements of social norms, expectation and fairness perception. In the instances where these elements are being met, the individual would be happy to do the housework and waiting on a partner, which leads to happiness. For another, this may not bring about happiness, as their expectations are that housework will be shared and could affect their perception of fairness in what each of the partners bring to the relationship:

Jane (FG Teachers): Your own personal – everyone is different, like you think of your happiness for you and what I'm happy with it, so I may be – if I was – if I find a man one day and get married, I might be happy to wait on him all the time and I'm happy to play the role of a submissive wife in my home, where you're not happy to do that, you want things to be done together, but it

doesn't make me unhappy because I don't mind to do this and do that and do that. Where you're saying no, no, I'm not gonna do – we can do it together.

Social norms and how we internalise gender roles impact on our levels of happiness. Mencarini and Sironi (2012) have argued that “social norms, embedding effects of past gender differences in family and working roles, are found to be internalized by both women and men, affecting individual happiness” (p. 6). Palesa’s story of her mother touches on what Mencarini and Sironi have referred to. Palesa states that whilst her mother is a strong woman she comes from a background where there are normative gender roles ascribed to men and women. She cites an example of gender inequality which her mom experiences. However, her mom does not see this as gender inequality and indicates that such an experiences does not detract from her mom’s happiness:



Palesa: So, so, if I, I think of my mother, for instance, she doesn't think like me. My mother comes from a historical background where women have their place. My mother is a very strong woman who, you know, built our home. But I also know, that she will, my family for instance, is practicing Christians, my mother would say things like, you know, if they are in a prayer situation and there is there is a male priest, she's not a priest, she's a prayerful person, she will say things like, or she tells the story, she says that something happened and they were here and there, and then I felt, she'll say things like, and she has said things like, or I felt that, you know, because the men were there, I couldn't go forward and pray, I wanted so much but the men were there and I couldn't be the one to lay hands and pray for this person because the men were there. So that's how she thinks and for her, it doesn't take away anything for her, she, in fact for her, what is fulfilling is that she has you know, allowed the man to, she feels good about that that she was able to do that, and I wouldn't, you know. So she has joy. So to answer the question, can you have well-being in the face of gender inequality, some, it depends really, on the circumstances, it depends on our expectations.

In keeping with what she sees as acceptable social norms, Palesa's mother does not question the fact that she is not able to participate equally with her peers. For her, it is acceptable that her position would be a supportive one to men, in this instance, in the church. She does not have any expectations that she should be able to participate equally in the church and thus does not see the situation as being unfair. In accordance with Fraser (2000, 2005, 2007a), Palesa's mother is being constrained from participating as an equal by institutional cultural hierarchies, which do not recognise the value that she brings. In the excerpt above, it is religion or the church that devalues her contribution, given her gender identity, and which constitutes her as subordinate, preventing her from participating on an equal basis with her peers. And yet she does not experience this as adversity since she is invested in these norms.

As seen in the data, there are instances where women can be happy without leading gender equal lives. In the interview with Amy, she indicated that you could have happiness without gender equality. Many women are happy to be caregivers and not have equal relations, and that does not make them unhappy. Women, like men, are invested in normative gender roles and therefore, as discussed above, receive validation and can derive happiness in the performance of these roles. However, women will certainly be unhappy if violence and coercion related to these normative roles are experienced. Grace expressed similar views to Amy; however, Grace questioned whether these women are genuinely happy:

Grace: And yes maybe – I mean we're all are internally oppressed, but there is happiness in the not knowing the oppression because you are not going against the grain, whether it's real happiness or an illusion of happiness, but there is a sense of I'm happy because I am the super woman and I get validation that you know, like my God, you know, I couldn't do all these things, and here I have shirts ironed and this done, so there's happiness because you get that validation. But from where I'm sitting I'm like, nah,

[laughs] I don't think you're really happy man [laughter] I really don't think you're happy, you know, what do you do? All you do is like live for children and husband or for the what the church will say, or what whoever will say you know. So, I think there's an illusion of happiness.

Grace was a key informant in the study. As a gender expert she raises the complexity that women are confronted with i.e. a society which values and measures women's success by their close alignment with normative gender roles. Women who thus perform normative gender roles as wives, mothers, caregivers, and who seemingly embrace these roles, are the *successful* women. Notwithstanding, Grace questions whether these women can really be happy. In this narrative, and perhaps unwittingly so, she speaks in a very judgmental tone, failing to believe that these women could really be happy. Is Grace (and thus feminism) not bringing a new orthodoxy of what happiness should be and how people should live their lives? And is feminism therefore not doing the very thing that they have fought against?

Mencarini and Sironi's (2012) finding that women's country of residence and context shapes women's perception of their share of household work and happiness explains Grace's comment above. The women that Grace is referring to may perceive their household tasks as normal and fair, and therefore provide some validation for the role that they play as mothers, wives and caregivers. However, for Grace, who does not perceive this as fair and whose context is different, this would impact negatively on her happiness. Grace questions the perceived happiness of the woman who finds happiness in subjecting her needs to that of her husband and children. Grace has a particular political and ideological stance on the matter. Nonetheless, the danger here would be that feminist ideology becomes the new orthodoxy judging who is the more successful woman. The view expressed by Grace is similar yet different to the view expressed by Hannah:

Hannah: I think you can have temporary happiness without gender equality, if it's not backwards, but I think it would come at a very high price. I think one has to cut down – and God knows, people do it all the time – I think you have to cut out a certain – you have to cut out a certain moral sensitivity and you have to be prepared to give up a certain amount of independence of thought.

The difference between the narratives of Grace and Hannah is the question of choice and capability. In the narrative of Grace, the women referred to appear to be limited in their choice and in their capabilities, as they are not aware of their capabilities and rights. In the narrative by Hannah, she expressed that women make the active decision to stay in particular gender unequal relations, for what she calls temporary happiness. In Hannah's example, I argue that women are making strategic choices, choices which at face value may seem and could be unequal or detrimental to them, but which for them, leads to a particular outcome which they seek. Nussbaum (2000) would argue here that the women have the capability (opportunity) to achieve what they want to achieve and that the capability is not denied to them. They have the freedom of choice and may choose not to perform the function.

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In the interview with Candice, she indicated that under apartheid, there were different inequalities, however this did not translate into people being unhappy. In other words, even in the face of inequalities, there can be happiness:

Candice: [...] but I look at how we grew up in – under apartheid, I mean I come from a family – and I mean I personally, I went to – I was beaten by the security police, I went to jail and all of that. But when I look back, and even if I look at our time, let's say at res at UWC, we didn't have equality, and on a number of levels obviously, but that does not mean to say that we were not – that we were unhappy, or that there was no "wellbeing." Even if I look at how under apartheid we lived in all these different communities, we couldn't go to particular restaurants, you couldn't vote, you were a second class citizen. But

within those spaces, people created spaces where I think they were able to manage their psychological and emotive and physical wellbeing.

Looking at the excerpt from Candice, two important aspects stand out. The first relates to the sphere of unhappiness. In her narrative, she clearly indicates that whilst there may be inequality in the public sphere, it is possible to be happy. Here I would argue that happiness is in the private sphere. The second aspect relates to how she defines happiness in this narrative. I would argue that she does not refer to happiness as life satisfaction. However, she does refer to the eudaimonic aspects of happiness – psychological well-being, mental well-being. The argument could thus be made that having inequality in one's life does not lead to overall life satisfaction, but that one can still experience emotional happiness in the private sphere of one's life. This scenario is not ideal, as overall happiness, both hedonic and eudaimonic, is needed to ensure flourishing. What is clear however is that social justice would not prevail in such conditions, but it appears as if you can have social injustices and happiness at the same time. However, I would argue you would not lead flourishing lives as social injustices would thwart you in becoming the best that you can be, as well as impact on your ability to participate equally with your peers, as was seen during colonial times and apartheid.

9.5.4 Gender inequality is unhappiness

Key informants as well as participants in the focus groups indicated that you cannot have happiness without gender equality. For them, gender equality is integral to happiness. Using Nussbaum's (1999, 2003) list of capabilities as well as Sen's argument that the capability approach is an appropriate framework for understanding gender equality, we could argue that unless women's capabilities are optimised they would not be able to achieve happiness. Social justice would not have been ensured unless the threshold of women's capabilities has been met. We should however keep in mind the different arenas where gender inequality can play itself out. These, as

identified by Walby (1997, 2009), are at the micro (individual, family), meso (community) and macro (state, global) levels. In addition, Walby (2009) recognised that there are four domains where gender inequality could further be played out. These are the economy, polity, violence and civil society (Walby, 2009). For some of the participants in the study, you would need gender equality across the domains as well as at the micro, meso and macro levels to be happy. This is seen in the narratives expressed by Beth and Candice below:

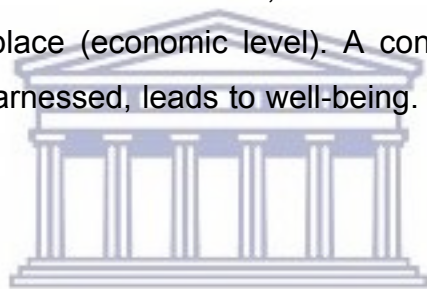
Beth (FG Community): I don't think we can have happiness without gender equality because you're going to have gender equality maybe in the workplace or in the community but not have it in the house. I don't have gender equality in the house, although my husband can – I'll say jump and he'll ask how high, but don't think that way where money is concerned, there he wears the pants, he won't give me money to buy the bread, he won't give me to buy meat, he'll buy it himself.

Candice: For me personally, you – I wouldn't be able to have life satisfaction without gender equality, personally or professionally or as a citizen of this country, the answer's no.

In Beth's account, she refers to the importance of gender equality at the micro (family, individual) as well meso (community) levels. In addition, she refers to the domains of work and the economy where gender equality is required. Using Fraser's (2000, 2007a) participatory parity, we see that Beth is further prevented from participating equally with her husband on the basis of resources. Beth's narrative demonstrates the importance of the redistribution of resources to ensure participatory parity. Beth's husband displays control and power through withholding resources from her. And whilst the capability approach has argued that resources are not a guarantee for happiness or well-being, it does facilitate well-being, as resources are a means to generate capabilities (Robeyns, 2008).

So too for Candice, we see that gender equality is necessary at the micro level (individual) as well as at the macro level (state). In addition, gender equality is essential at the level of the workplace or economy.

Palesa's narrative below can best be analysed using an intersectional approach. Addressing inequalities at the intersection of race and gender is imperative for achieving those goals that you set yourself, and for becoming the best that you can be (capabilities). Race or gender inequalities cannot be addressed in isolation from each other. Social justice for black women requires that discrimination on the basis of race and gender, amongst other inequalities, be addressed. Furthermore, these inequalities have to be addressed in the workplace (economic level). A conducive environment, in which capabilities are harnessed, leads to well-being. This is demonstrated in the narrative below:



Palesa: [...] if it so happens that in in in my environment, I am frustrated, my work is frustrated for whatever reason it may be because my blackness if my work is frustrated because of race or because of gender, err then I'm frustrated, then I do not have well-being.

Scholars including Crenshaw (1989, 1997; Hill Collins, 1990; hooks, 1997; King, 1997) have long indicated that black women's experiences cannot be understood on the basis of race or gender alone, as (black) women are situated within corresponding structures of subordination. The intersectional approach thus provides a theoretical framework in which one can understand Palesa's well-being. For her, and within an intersectional approach, addressing subordination and social injustice on the basis of race and gender is essential for her well-being. Participating equally with her peers and being the best that she is able to be would only be possible if she is not denied the

necessary recognition or does not suffer from status inequality based on her race and gender (Fraser, 2007a).

9.5.5 Gender equality and happiness are not and should not be linked

My question of whether gender equality and happiness were linked elicited a degree of concern amongst some of the key informants, including Mandy, Palesa, Susan and Zinzi. Some of these key informants had also expressed concern about the concepts gender equality and happiness, as reported on in Chapter Seven, as well as earlier in this chapter. This concern was, however, not widespread amongst participants.

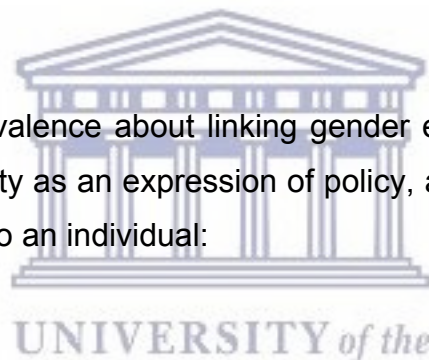
As indicated in Chapter Seven, Mandy had some concern with the concept gender equality. She had also raised a concern that often progress in women's lives could not be linked solely to their gender, as women were simultaneously raced and classed (amongst others), besides being gendered. In the extract below, Mandy refers to the intersections of identities, and that one cannot single out gender equality and link it to happiness:

Mandy: I mean I think the first point that comes up for me I suppose is that gender equality does not live in isolation of other form of equality at all, it operates at the intersection, you know all of the stuff, of other forms of being in the world. So to assess the extent to which gender equality leads to happiness or fulfilment or – without looking at how it interacts with how people are positioned racially in a society, economically in a society, sexually in a society, almost for me feels very, very narrow.

Mandy raises an important argument in the narrative above. As a key informant, she is acutely aware that women may simultaneously face discrimination on the basis of their race, gender, class, and other identities,

and that addressing some of these inequalities only does not lead to well-being. It is a given that gender equality is not the only requirement for happiness. I have further acknowledged that women face many inequalities based on their positioning as well as social identities. Social justice would thus not be realised without addressing the many multifaceted layers of inequalities that shape women's experiences. Notwithstanding the value of intersectional approaches, Puar (2012) has critiqued feminists deployment of intersectional approaches, and has argued that it has the effect of "re-securing the centrality of the subject positioning of white women" and "Othering women of colour" (p. 52). The question posed in this study has been whether gender equality and happiness are linked and whether gender equality makes women happy. Having said this, we know that gender equality and happiness are correlated (Holter, 2014).

Susan expressed ambivalence about linking gender equality and happiness. She sees gender equality as an expression of policy, and happiness as being subjective and internal to an individual:



Susan: Ja, I mean I guess that the bottom line is that happiness is an internal, very subjective experience. And gender equality is not seen as an internal subjective experience. It is measurable, it's you know we count it with numbers and with distribution of resources and with. It is not an internalized experience, so how can you put the two together. Because on one hand you're saying that you come up with your own sense of happiness it's an internal thing but we're putting this measurable thing this almost unattainable, at the moment, thing on this a sense of happiness. And we know that people can feel happiness in what we might consider horrible situations. Errm, so how do we reconcile the two ideas of happiness and gender equality? They seem very errm, mismatched to me, if you like, or the one is subjective and the other isn't.

Two concerns emanate from Susan's narrative above. The first concern is that happiness is a subjective experience as she calls it, which for her, cannot be measured, whereas gender equality is measurable and not internal, perhaps meaning not an affective experience. The second concern that she raises is that one can have happiness without gender equality and by implication therefore, gender equality and happiness cannot be linked. Given that section 9.5.3 discussed the circumstances in which you can have happiness without gender equality, I will not repeat the discussion here.

Related to her first concern, and as was discussed in Chapter Three, happiness studies are a growing field. Contradicting what Susan has said, happiness is a concept that can be measured (see happiness studies for example undertaken by Diener, 2012; Diener et al, 2006; Frey & Stutzer, 2002a; Veenhoven, 2004; World Happiness Reports; World Database on Happiness). Perhaps the concern raised by Susan is not so much about the measurability of individual happiness but that a policy cannot result in individual hedonic nor eudaimonic happiness. Yet policy or policy intention has been used to bring about happiness. We see this expressed in the Constitution of Bhutan, which states, "The State shall strive to promote those conditions that will enable the pursuit of Gross National Happiness" (Royal Audit Authority), as well as in the American Declaration of Independence:

We hold these truths to be self-evident – that all men [sic] are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness (American Declaration of Independence, National Archives, 2017).

The focus of the Bhutan Constitution and the American Declaration of Independence on happiness supports the argument that policy can be used to drive a happiness agenda. By the same measure, policies on gender equality are used to drive an agenda of well-being.

In section 9.5.3, participants had argued that one could have happiness without gender equality. However, for these participants, gender equality and happiness are linked. Zinzi and Cindy and others in the focus group with teachers made the same argument that one can be happy without gender equality. However, they use this argument to justify why happiness and gender equality are not linked:

Cindy (FG Teachers): Because that would mean that maybe before 1994 women were just not happy

Sam: Yeah

Buhle: Exactly

Zinzi and Cindy's views that gender equality and happiness are not linked perhaps signify, for them, the idea that gender equality cannot be the sole predictor of happiness. As we have seen from a number of scholars, happiness is mediated by a number of other factors, which include amongst others, social support, freedom to make life choices, trust, health, money and generosity towards others (see Helliwell, Layard, & Sachs, 2017; Seligman, 2002).

Gender equality will not be achieved if happiness is meant to be our ultimate goal. This is the view of Mandy. She is of the view that happiness needs to be disrupted in order to make progress to the ideals of gender equality. Any attempts at the disruption of such happiness (in Mandy's narrative happiness is linked to people, most often men, having power) are meant to cause unhappiness. Her views are closely aligned to what Ahmed (2007/2008) has called the 'kill joy'. The struggle for equality would thus mean that the joy of others, linked to them being privileged because of their whiteness, class, gender, sexuality, amongst others, will be killed. The feminist struggle or the struggle for gender equality is thus equated with being a kill joy. Any attempt

to expose inequalities, sexism, discrimination against women, black (women), queers, amongst others, would thus be seen as an attack against happiness:

Mandy: So, happiness cannot be the measure of the struggle for equality, otherwise we'll lose it because people are not happy when they have to relinquish power, they're very, very unhappy. So in that sense I would say that happiness might very well work against the struggle for gender equality because shifting makes people angry and defensive and you know, ja, but that's what it takes.

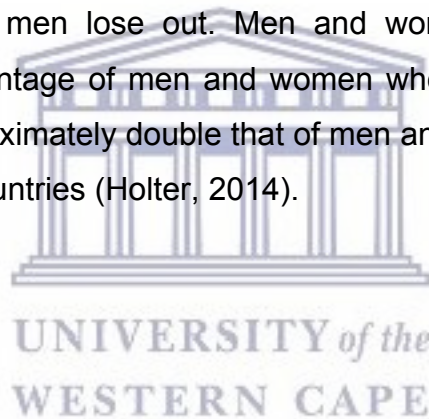
Mandy's argument resonates with what Ahmed (2010) has expressed when she argues that the discourse on happiness is used to justify women's oppression and patriarchy, and that the happiness discourse keeps women in positions of subordination. Through the discourse of happiness, oppressive heteronormative practices and roles are conveyed as social goods, and thus make it difficult for women to leave positions of subordination.

Mandy goes further and indicates that in order to get on a more equal basis, power would have to be taken away or given up by those in power. She contends that the persons who have to give up power would be discontent in doing so:

Mandy: Ja, I don't think equality is a state of contentment because the thing is if – let's look at inequality, I find that it's always more useful to name the problem. So the problem is inequality right? So in order to address inequality, and if I see inequality as in indicator of power, right, of unequal power, let's say; so in this case unequal gender power. So to try and bring the equilibrium of power more equitably in gender relations it ultimately means taking away some kinds of power, that's what it means, very simply put. The issue of male masculine entitlement or sexual license, the idea that men are entitled to – they're entitled to women basically, sexually: men's sexual entitlement. Now, the only way that

we are going to address that at the level of power is to take away that entitlement, is to stop that, resist and stop that, now that's not gonna make men feel happy at all. They're gonna be discontent and they're going to defend against.

Mandy touches on what Connell (2011) has referred to as the patriarchal dividend. Men might not want to give up power in gender relations, as they benefit from it. Some research on gender equality has taken a negative view of the benefits for men. Some studies suggest that men might lose out, possibly on power and prestige – what women gain from gender equality, men lose out on (Holter, 2014). This has been referred to as the zero sum gain, where women's gains are seen as men's losses (Holter, 2014). Holter's (2014) study on what benefits men do or do not get from gender equality negates the view that men lose out. Men and women gain from gender equality, and the percentage of men and women who are happy in gender-equal countries is approximately double that of men and women feeling happy in less gender-equal countries (Holter, 2014).



9.6 Conclusion

Whilst many participants in the study spoke about how they understand and perceived happiness, some participants indicated discomfort with the notion. Their discomfort was tied to them not equating happiness with overall life satisfaction. Happiness rather signifies a moment, best expressed through affect (pain, joy). This moment is thus not a reflection of their overall state of well-being. The term happiness therefore does not do justice to their overall state of well-being.

Overall, many of the participants spoke of happiness as eudaimonia. In the imaginaries of participants, happiness meant development, personal growth, balance, and being the best that one can be. As discussed in section 9.2.2,

these constructions resonate with what happiness scholars have called psychological well-being – the meaning that people make from life and what they are able to achieve. In addition, some participants construed happiness as joy, pain, satisfaction with life, in other words, as including both the affect as well as cognitive components of subjective well-being or hedonia. This finding supports many other studies which constructs happiness as hedonic and eudaimonic (as discussed in section 9.2 above).

A key finding of this study, however, was that participants had constructions of happiness which were not aligned with the hegemonic constructions of happiness as hedonic or eudaimonic. Rather, participants used discourses such as ‘diminishing suffering, improving the lives of others, making a difference, involvement with others’ to reflect what they meant with happiness. Their constructions of happiness were thus embedded or inter-connected with others. Participants articulated a social connection or inter-connectedness or inter-relatedness of their happiness with those of ‘others’. The ‘other’ in this context, is not only the ‘other’ as in individual but also the ‘other’ as signifying community and family. This finding resonates with scholars who have posited that country contexts and country diversities shape how happiness is perceived or constructed by its people (Delle Fave & Bassi, 2009; Diener, Oishi & Lucas, 2004; Khumalo, 2014; Tov & Diener, 2007; Wissing & Temane, 2008). The articulation of happiness by participants in this study thus holds significance for developing a happiness construct that is unique to South Africa. A critique from a feminist perspective, however, is that this conceptualisation of happiness conforms to hegemonic, neoliberal views that tie women’s happiness to those of others i.e. the notion that I can only be a ‘true women’ if I find happiness in the achievements or happiness of others i.e. husbands, children, etc. An intersectional approach will best assist us in understanding this finding.

Whilst participants spoke clearly of different meanings of happiness, they saw these different meanings as referring to one construct – happiness. This

resonates with the argument made by Biswas-Diener, Kashdan and King (2009), who stated that there are not (two) distinct types of happiness, rather there are two traditions of happiness research. I would further argue that this holds implications for how we study happiness in South Africa and globally. If happiness is composed of so many different elements, it is possibly better and would provide a more holistic view to study happiness as a composite construct, instead of through its individual components. Especially as no distinction is made in the imaginaries of the participants between hedonic, eudaimonic and, in the case of this study, inter-connectedness of happiness. Social policy interventions would further need to take these complexities into account when crafting strategies to bolster happiness and ensuring that the recipients of social policies are able to flourish.

Most of the women in this study indicated that they were happy. This however does not mean that they were happy all the time. Notwithstanding, they were satisfied with their lives. Several life domains contributed to their happiness. These domains include inter-personal relationships, not being married, religion, work, community engagement and having freedom, voice and agency. Other research has shown similar findings around domains which impact on happiness. Religion is an interesting domain that influences one's happiness for some, but for others, religion is seen as a source of oppression and as an institution that holds women in positions of subordination. The same for marriage: whilst happiness research has mostly regarded marriage as an important factor for happiness, feminist research, as well as the findings of this study, shows that marriage can also be a domain of unhappiness for many women. As seen in this study, unequal gender relations within marriage is a reason for unhappiness.

In the perceptions of participants, gender equality and happiness are linked. This is a crucial finding of this study. The links between gender equality and happiness are however not linear. Whilst noting that there is a link between gender equality and happiness, this does not infer that there is a causal

relationship between gender equality and happiness. Based on the findings, a schema of four quadrants of happiness and gender equality are identified which speak to the complexity of the findings. The first quadrant being that you can have gender equality without happiness. Gender equality at the macro and meso levels are possible without having happiness in the public sphere or private sphere. Examples of this scenario are seen where gender equality legislation is in place, yet within the workplace women are unhappy, as they have to work so much harder to prove that they are competent and able to hold the positions that they hold, and that they are not merely in positions due to affirmative action policies. A second example can be seen in the home. Whilst women might have equality in the public sphere, they may not have equality in the private sphere, leading to a disjuncture between the private and public, and the reason for unhappiness. In both examples, as relayed in the narratives of participants, gender equality opportunities are available in the public sphere. However, as gender regimes have not shifted, and as hegemonic social norms have not been disrupted, women are unhappy as they continue to face gender injustices, even in the presence of seeming gender equal opportunities. It is precisely because women choose to make use of gender equal opportunities in contexts where gender injustices persist that they are unhappy.



A second quadrant pertains to having happiness without gender equality. Participants indicated that women could be happy in unequal relations, as (1) they do not view the relations as unequal, (2) they find validation from performing 'traditional' gender roles in their relations, (3) religion justifies women's subordination in unequal relations, and (4) women exert power within their unequal relations and make strategic choices, which allow them to achieve that which they desire to achieve.

As discussed in section 9.5.3, some women (and men) are invested in hegemonic gender norms and their identities are bound to their roles as mothers, wives, lovers and carers, amongst others, because ultimately these

are the roles that society dictates that women should value. It thus goes without saying that some women will thus be happy in performing these roles, as it provides them with the necessary validation and recognises them as 'woman'. Key informants in this study, as seen in the narrative of Grace, questioned whether women performing hegemonic gender roles, or as in the narratives of Candice and Hannah, whether religion could 'result' in women being happy. This is a concerning narrative as we should guard against feminism and feminists becoming the new orthodoxy on what would be deemed acceptable happiness or acceptable determinants of happiness for women.

For many participants in the study, gender inequality is linked with unhappiness. This is the third quadrant of gender equality and happiness. Participants noted that you cannot have gender equality in some aspects of your life without having it in others. For example, you cannot have gender equality in the public sphere and not have it in the private sphere and expect happiness. Gender equality is required in both the public and private spheres in order to have happiness. Furthermore, in keeping with Fraser's view, one participant noted that she was unhappy in her personal life because she was unable to participate equally with her husband due to a lack of economic resources. This supports Fraser's (2000, 2005), argument that economic redistribution is an important aspect of justice.

The fourth quadrant is that of gender equality being equated to happiness. This quadrant mirrors the one of gender inequality being related to unhappiness. Many participants spoke of gender equality and happiness using the same constructs. Freedom, agency and voice, which were associated with gender equality in Chapter Seven, are also associated with happiness in this chapter. The narratives of participants reflected the complexities and nuances between happiness and gender equality as notions that intersect and that are strongly connected to each other. Gender equality and happiness are entangled and interact with each other in multiple ways, as

seen in participants' expression of similar notions to describe happiness and gender equality.

Increasing women's experiences and perceptions that they have of leading gender equal lives will thus positively impact on their happiness and well-being. Targeted gender equality interventions are thus not only of value in the arena of bringing about better conditions for women, but also for increasing their overall well-being.

Notwithstanding that most participants perceived gender equality and happiness to be linked, some participants felt that gender equality and happiness could not be linked for various reasons. The starkest of these was argued by Mandy who said that gender equality would not be achieved if we were concerned with achieving happiness. Mandy argued that happiness needs to be disrupted in order to make progress to the ideals of gender equality. Any attempts at the disruption of such happiness (in Mandy's narrative happiness is linked to having power – this could be based on gender, race, class, amongst others) would cause unhappiness. Unhappiness is thus essential for disrupting heteronormative norms, hence Mandy's assertion that the 'struggle for happiness would derail the struggle for gender equality'. Holter (2014) in a study on gender equality and its benefits for men has shown that men do not lose out (lose power) when societies are more gender equal. *Au contraire*, men stand to gain from gender equality and men and women are happier in gender equal societies than in societies that are gender unequal (Holter, 2014).

In summation, in this chapter I looked at how participants spoke of and experienced happiness. It is evident that the meaning of happiness extended beyond hedonia and eudemonia, and also included happiness in relation to others. On whether happiness and gender equality are linked, it is evident that for the women of this study, gender equality and happiness are linked. They

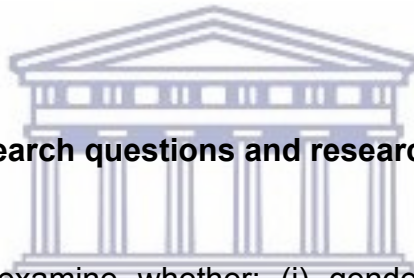
spoke about gender equality and happiness being linked in four ways, which I presented schematically and discussed.



Chapter Ten: Living gender equal and happy lives

10.1 Introduction

In this chapter I present a summary of the key findings of this study. In doing so, I return to the research questions and the main objectives of the study. Based on the findings, I discuss the study's empirical and conceptual contributions to gender equality and happiness scholarship, as well as to gender equality policy and programmatic interventions. The chapter concludes by looking at the study's shortcomings and offers recommendations for future research endeavours within the fields of gender equality and happiness.



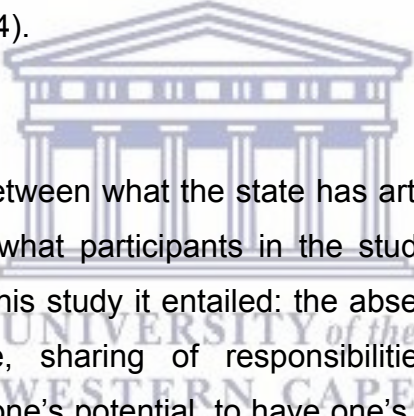
10.2 Revisiting the research questions and research objectives

The study set out to examine whether: (i) gender equality policies and practices reportedly impact positively on women's lives, does it 'make women happy'? and (ii) it is possible to have gender equality without happiness and vice versa. More specifically, the objectives of the study were to explore:

- A group of South African women's definitions and understandings of gender equality
- A group of South African women's reported subjective experiences and perceptions of the effectiveness of gender equality measures in contemporary South Africa
- How a group of South African women define happiness in their lives and in the lives of other women, and whether they believe that happiness is or should be linked to gender equality and in what ways
- To examine the intersection of race and class in women's constructions and experiences of gender equality and happiness.

10.3 Understanding gender equality and happiness

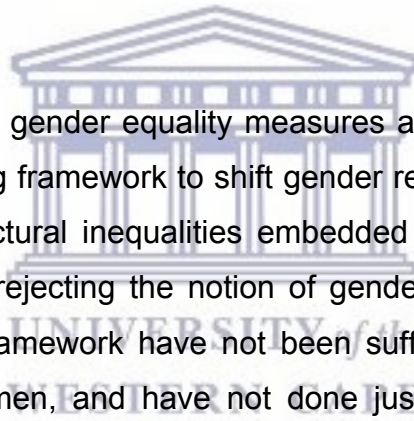
South Africa's National Policy Framework for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality states that gender equality does not simply mean equality with men. Gender equality is about ensuring that women and men have the same conditions under which to fulfill their potential and enjoy their full human rights, whilst contributing equally to political, economic, social and cultural developments, and equally reaping the rewards of such developments. Furthermore, the Promotion of Equality and the Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act (Act 4 of 2000), defines equality to include "the full and equal enjoyment of rights and freedoms as contemplated in the Constitution and includes *de jure* and *de facto* equality and also equality in terms of outcomes" (Promotion of Equality and the Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act 4 of 2000, (RSA), p. 4).



There is clear overlap between what the state has articulated as its definition of gender equality and what participants in the study perceived as gender equality. For women in this study it entailed: the absence of discrimination, a life free from violence, sharing of responsibilities, the recognition of differences, realising of one's potential, to have one's rights protected, having voice and agency, to ensure that there is redress, having access to resources, and recognising that gender equality still needs to be navigated. I would argue that various role-players, including the state, media, academia, women's organisations and NGOs, amongst others have succeeded in their task in conscientising and making matters of gender (in)equality visible. Whether this has shifted gender relations, power relations, and the heteronormative patriarchal social order is a different question to which I return in section 10.4.

Whilst the findings of this study show that participants recognised numerous impediments to gender equality, these impediments remain mostly at the level of the individual, meaning that the participants noted that the constraints were

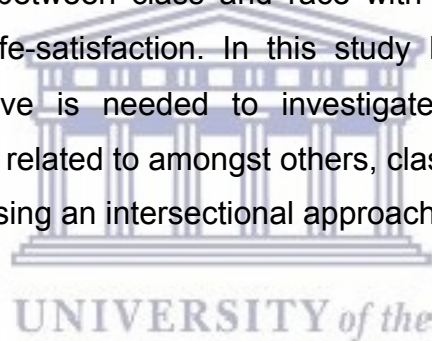
within the control of individuals and they did not attribute these to systemic obstructions. The locating of these barriers at an individual level is characterised in the narratives where participants felt that discriminatory attitudes and behaviours of individuals should be addressed, that they (the women participants) have not taken up equality opportunities or made much of the opportunities that are available to women. This understanding of equality fails to take into consideration the structural embeddedness of inequality in the fabric of society, thus supporting neoliberal individual ideologies. This understanding of gender equality further fails to recognise the need for discomfort, rupture and restructuring of our society, a society which, in spite of its progressive gender policies and programmes, maintains and reproduces gender inequality that is deeply interwoven with other forms of inequality.



The perceived failure of gender equality measures and gender equality as a concept and overarching framework to shift gender relations, power relations, patriarchy and the structural inequalities embedded in society had led to a number of participants rejecting the notion of gender equality. They argued that the concept and framework have not been sufficient in addressing the injustices faced by women, and have not done justice to transforming the social order. The question this raises is what are the implications for the state and for the work undertaken by organisations and gender activists who do employ gender equality as an overarching framework. Clearly, the gender equality framework or gender machinery, as it is called by governmental and transnational bodies, is one that is employed locally and globally and that is recognised by women and men. Is the answer to employ gender justice terminology as an alternative? As argued by scholars such as Goetz (2007) and Molyneux (2007), gender justice expands on the principle of gender equality, and argues that redress and taking differences into account is an important aspect in shifting patriarchal norms. Notwithstanding, I argue that employing the term gender justice as an alternative may not be an effective response to the critiques raised by many feminists and some of the participants of this study. Rather, what is needed is to ensure that gender

justice strategies, with their aims to bring about change through redress, are incorporated into the current policies and practices of those working in the gender equality and gender justice sectors, including in the state, non-governmental organisations, globally and transnationally.

Next I turn to the findings related to happiness. How did women in the study speak of happiness and are they happy? As the results clearly indicate, and in relation to the instruments employed in this study to assess this, women reported that they are happy. These findings are borne out by the results of the quantitative as well as the qualitative components of the study. Women's positionality, in terms of class, race, educational status and marital status are important in understanding their happiness. Of particular importance is the significant relationship between class and race with happiness-as-affect as well as happiness-as-life-satisfaction. In this study I have argued that an intersectional perspective is needed to investigate gender equality and happiness. The findings related to amongst others, class, race and happiness, provides credence for using an intersectional approach in this study.



In spite of the conceptualisation of happiness deployed in this study, participants spoke about happiness both as eudaimonic (referring to psychological well-being) as well as hedonic (referring to subjective well-being, including affect as well as life satisfaction). However, an important finding for this study is that participants' conceptualisations of happiness went beyond eudaimonia and hedonia. Happiness signifies more to participants and is integrally related to the well-being of others, others as individuals but also to others as a collective – community or society. Inter-connectedness with others is thus a key element of happiness. This supports research which has argued that happiness may be influenced by cultural diversity and country contexts, and that aspects of happiness may look different in different countries (Delle Fave & Bassi, 2009; Khumalo, 2014; Wissing & Temane, 2008). The following graphic represents participants narratives on what happiness means to them:

Figure 7: Happiness as conceptualised by participants



The results of the qualitative study indicate that participants do not draw a distinction between life satisfaction, well-being, the ups and downs and joys of life, contentment, etc. This finding supports the arguments by Biswas-Diener, Kashdan and King (2009), that there are no two distinct aspects of happiness, rather that the differences lie in the research undertaken on happiness i.e. a focus on the hedonic or eudaimonic aspect. However, when considering the results of the quantitative study, and particularly the questions on whether participants are happy and their levels of life satisfaction, it is clear that the constructs measure different things (as has been argued by Sachs, 2012 and others). This is particularly so when I looked at the relationship between the happy variable and the life satisfaction variable, and its relationship with other variables, including the gender equality variables and demographic variables. I pick up on this seeming contradiction when I consider the contribution that this study has made to existing literature, amongst others.

10.4 The effectiveness of gender equality measures

It is evident from participants' narratives that the changes in legislation have been positive. Some of the positive changes relate to an acknowledgement of the role that women have played in the struggle for liberation, the political recognition of women as citizens of the country, increased opportunities, and greater autonomy and choice for women.

Notwithstanding the positive changes that have taken place at a macro level, the results of the study point to the inequalities that are still pervasive, and indicate that the gender equality measures put in place have not had the anticipated transformatory effect on the lives of (all, if any) women. Some examples emanating from the study on the continued challenges include the problematic implementation of legislation, such as the Domestic Violence Act, the increased workload of women who have taken up opportunities provided through progressive legislative changes in the workplace, inequalities experienced across race and class in accessing economic resources and opportunities, the lack of transformative changes in gender relations and patriarchy in society. Participants' discourse reflects their reality that *de jure* gender equality has been achieved but not *de facto* gender equality.

The majority of women in the quantitative component of the study indicated that having the same rights as men is an important marker of democracy. Of concern, as stated previously, was the 15% of women who do not value gender equality. The quantitative study does not provide any insight into the reasons for this view. Possible explanations could be that women are invested in normative, patriarchal gender roles, as was seen in the qualitative study. Or, as previously argued, that religion, culture and or tradition have been used as arguments to maintain, reinforce and reproduce gender inequalities and normative gender roles and practices (Shefer et al., 2008; Voicu, Voicu & Strapcova, 2009).

Looking at the results of the qualitative and quantitative studies in unison, the complexity of gender equality is revealed. Whilst overwhelmingly women spoke of the importance of gender equality across the studies, their narratives and responses in some instances indicate otherwise, reflecting a range of discourses where women are held accountable for violence committed against them, women play a role in perpetuating gender unequal practices in the home and women hold conservative views in relation to women's roles in business, politics, etc. So whilst women may subscribe to notions of patriarchy and 'buy into' gender binaries i.e. men are men and women are women, simultaneously they want gender equality. We note, however, that queer theory challenges this very binary and neat formulation of gender equality.

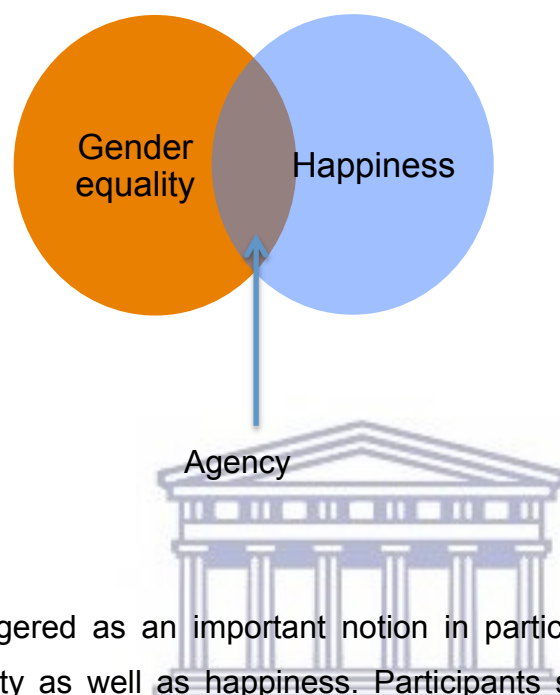
The implications of such normative discourses, views and practices are of course that gender unequal practices get maintained and reproduced from within the home. This is reinforced in the practices of the everyday, seemingly normal gender inequitable social order. So whilst gender equality measures have tried to disrupt some of these unequal gender practices at the macro and micro level, they have clearly been ineffectual, and have focused largely on neoliberal counting and regulatory measures.

10.5 Links between gender equality and happiness

Gender equality and happiness are linked. Not only is gender equality and happiness linked in the imaginaries of the participants in the qualitative study, but this finding is supported, albeit it to lesser extent, in the quantitative findings. What the collective findings do point to is the complexities and nuances between gender equality and happiness – at times intersecting and revealing strong associations between the concepts, whilst simultaneously being able to exist parallel to each other.

I briefly reflect on those intersections between gender equality and happiness and present this graphically below:

Figure 8: Agency at the intersection of gender equality and happiness



Agency emerged as an important notion in participants' narratives about gender equality as well as happiness. Participants spoke of agency as the freedom to choose, having voice and having control, amongst others. In the quantitative study, free choice and control of one's life, which I defined as agency, was a predictor of happiness. That agency emerged as a key factor in gender equality and happiness is not surprising, and supports similar arguments made by Kabeer (1999), Nussbaum (1999), Sen (1999, 2009) and Seligman (2002), amongst others. Agency thus becomes a key element in pursuing and experiencing happiness as well as gender equality. I would however argue that the focus should not solely be on individual agency, which often feeds into neoliberal capitalist discourse, as has been shown in this study. Agency should include feminist agency or an agency that recognises the different positionalities of women, and that allows women to act in solidarity with other women and in pursuit of gender justice (Maitra, 2013; Mohanty, 2003). This is the kind of agency that I would propose we need to foster in addition to individual agency.

The qualitative component of the study, clearly identified the linkages and fissures in the relationship between gender equality and happiness. To reiterate, I identified four quadrants of gender equality and happiness. These were: (i) Gender Equality is happiness: participants' narratives reflect the view that gender equality is a social good and that it is integral to happiness. More equal relationships, addressing heteronormative gender roles as well as addressing patriarchy are equated to happier lives. (ii) Gender equality without happiness: gender equal opportunities have not translated into a transformative social order and gender regimes have not changed. Women continue to face injustices and thus women are unhappy. These findings concur with the findings of the quantitative component, where I observed that women value gender equality and may want to take up gender equality opportunities, but it leads to them feeling that children suffer. The argument can thus be made that when women take up positions equal to men, but within a social order that continues to be shaped by gender binarisms, they may even be punished by finding themselves with multiple loads and social disfavour leading to unhappiness. (iii) Happiness without gender equality: women could find themselves in gender unequal relations yet be happy. This is most often when women have bought in to normative gender roles in a society. (iv) Gender inequality is unhappiness: here it is argued that the gender equality project is essential to happiness, and thus that gender inequality equates to unhappiness. The results of the quantitative component further support this finding. Participants who became more aware of gender inequalities became less satisfied with life. However, this was not true for happiness-as-affect, as no significant relationship was observed between the view participants held related to various gender equality questions and happiness-as-affect.

In summation, gender equality and happiness are linked. However, it is observed that we can have gender equality without happiness and happiness without gender equality. Notwithstanding I would argue that we should try and move women into the quadrant: gender equality is happiness. As has been argued elsewhere in this dissertation, gender equality is good for both men

and women not to mention society more generally (Hearn, 2007; Ratele, 2008; UN, 2008,). How do we then ensure that when gender equal opportunities are taken up, that this leads to happiness and not unhappiness. I briefly engage this question in the section detailing the contributions that this study make to the field of gender equality and happiness.

10.6 Contributions of the study

As indicated in Chapter One, very little research has been undertaken on the relationship between gender equality and happiness. Where such studies have been undertaken, the approach has been quantitative, which has revealed little about the nuances of the linkages and scissions between gender equality and happiness. The qualitative component of this study has contributed to the understanding and complexities of this relationship, which has particular relevance for scholarship in these fields, as well as for policy and programmatic interventions. This is a broad contribution which this study has made. I now turn to some of the more specific contributions of the study.

Participants' conceptualisations and understanding of gender equality points to the need for policy, gender equality interventions and gender equality that 'speak' to encapsulating the strategies associated with gender justice. In other words, the interventions should convey not only reformative strategies but also be transformative in nature. These interventions should speak to disruptions in the social order – whether at the level of heteronormative social relations, or at the level of addressing the structural inequalities that continue to characterise societies.

Drawing on intersectionality as well as the capabilities approach provided a lens through which to make sense of how narratives on gender equality (and especially the impediments to gender equality) impact on women's

capabilities. The study clearly shows that despite gender equal opportunities, women are not able to meet some of the capabilities identified by Nussbaum (1999, 2003). This in turn impacts on happiness. So whilst women may report being happy, a look at whether they have achieved capabilities provides an indication of how far gender equality measures have gone or not gone in facilitating gender justice and to what extent this has translated in happiness.

An important finding of this study should certainly be that 15% of women did not think that gender equality is an important aspect of democracy. Additionally, that 49.6% of women felt that men make better political leaders than women, and the 48.2% who felt that men make better business leaders. This has far reaching consequences for work that the state as well as other role-players do in relation to gender equality. It speaks to the literature that contends that women too are invested in patriarchy. This holds implications for what opportunities girls and boys are afforded by their caregivers and ultimately, which capabilities they are able to fulfill and what they are able to achieve. Patriarchal norms and practices are maintained, perpetuated and presented as 'normal' and everyday. It raises questions of how the state as well as other institutions intervene at the micro level of the home and family. Policy on its own is clearly insufficient in bringing about transformative change in gender regimes, gender order and gender relations.

The quadrant on the links between gender equality and happiness, as well as conceptualisation of gender equality points to the need for innovative thinking around our gender equality efforts. Of particular importance is the quadrant relating to gender equality without happiness. What we see from the study is that women who take up gender equal opportunities, and who appear to be in gender equitable situations, continue to suffer injustices in other areas. I argue that this is the case because (South African) society has not changed. Women who are successful in a patriarchal social order may suffer overload and stress, as other aspects of their lives have not changed. From the study we observe that women continue to face unequal workloads in the home, and

continue to carry the burden of what gender normativity implies and expects from them, hence their perception that children suffer when mothers work. Women who then do not take up gender equality offers may be happier than women who do take up these opportunities. These could be some of the unintended consequences of what purports to be gender equality opportunities.

As part of the rationale for this study, I cited the dearth of information on how laypersons speak of happiness. The findings relating to happiness contribute in the following ways:

- They contribute to scholarship on how laypersons think of and understand happiness, extending understandings of happiness beyond eudaimonia and hedonia, which has been the normative conceptualisation of happiness. This impacts on how happiness studies are undertaken. It also provides support for research that argues that happiness is informed by country diversities.
- My study shows that it is important to have a more inclusive and integrated look at the term happiness. It is best to undertake happiness research that includes both the hedonic component, as well as the eudaimonic components, and also to leave room for further constructs of happiness to emerge. Having studies which focus on a more inclusive understanding of happiness might provide further insight to participants understandings of concepts such as happiness-as-affect and happiness-as-life-satisfaction, and whether using the concepts (happiness, well-being, subjective well-being) interchangeably is indeed problematic, as I suggest later on.
- For policy makers, the understanding of happiness holds value in conceptualising policy and how programmes intended to foster happiness are crafted. Drawing on the importance given to interconnectedness in conceptualising happiness, it provides government with an opportunity to enhance well-being and happiness of individuals

as well as of communities. Social policy interventions would further need to take these complexities into account when crafting strategies to bolster happiness, and ensure that the recipients of social policies are able to flourish.

- The use of the term happiness interchangeably with life satisfaction and subjective well-being is potentially problematic for the following reasons:
 - The notion fails to convey the broad spectrum of what happiness (in the imaginaries of laypersons outside of scholarship) entails i.e. that it covers affect and life satisfaction or subjective well-being as well as inter-connectedness.
 - In reference to the quantitative study, happiness (affect) and life satisfaction measure different things (as have been acknowledged by scholars; see World Happiness Database). Using the terms interchangeably will result in reliability and validity concerns regarding what is being measured, but also holds implications for measures introduced to enhance affect and or life satisfaction. Clarity as to what is being measured is essential.

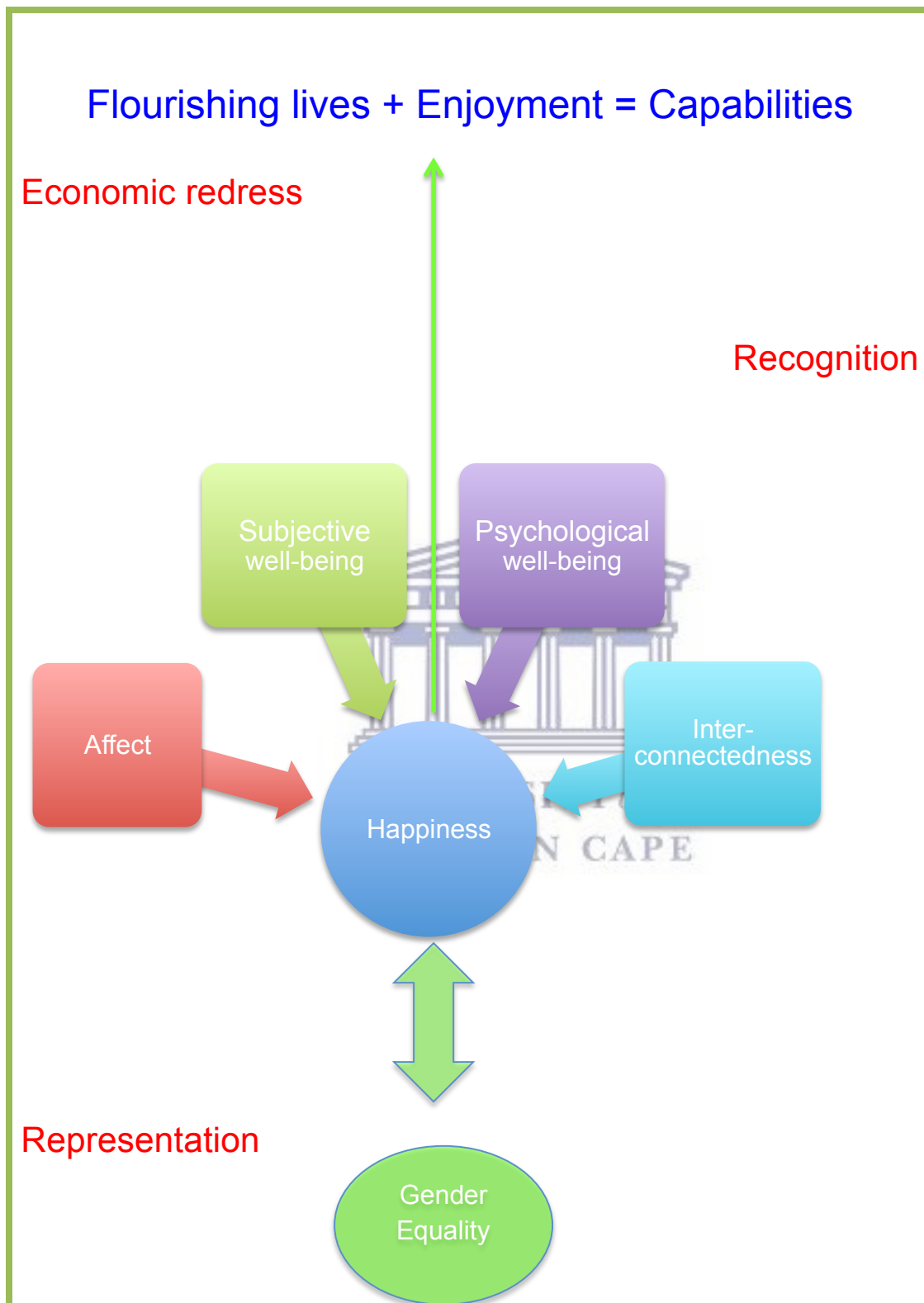
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As discussed in this dissertation, definitions of (gender) equality have contained the element of 'enjoyment of rights'. Enjoyment as a concept has links with happiness. Gender equality contributes to happiness, the enjoyment of one's rights and freedoms and leads to flourishing lives, where one can achieve that which we value and want to achieve. In other words leading flourishing lives facilitates the achievement of one's capabilities. Using Fraser's (1995, 1998, 2007a) trivalent view of justice, this happens in the context of economic redress, recognition of cultural differences, and representation orientated to the norm of participatory parity. Intervention measures by the state and other role-players would thus of necessity need to interrogate and put in places strategies to enable women (and men) to live flourishing lives, whilst enjoying their rights and freedoms and facilitating the achievement of their capabilities. The following graphic offers a visual

representation of links between gender equality and happiness, and the envisaged outcomes of the relationship between gender equality and happiness.



Figure 9: Living flourishing lives, through gender equality and happiness



10.7 Limitations of the study and recommendations for future research

A number of the limitations of this study relate to the use of the World Values Survey data set. Firstly, the gender equality variables measure only certain aspects of gender equality. The results of the qualitative study show far broader conceptualisations of gender equality as do the definitions of gender equality in legislation and policy documents in South Africa. It is thus recommended that future research develops specific gender equality measures or draws on existing gender equality indices which measure the concept more fully.

Secondly, whilst the hypotheses answered the question of whether there is a relation between gender equality and happiness and whether gender equality is a predictor, this question was not posed directly to participants. Future research endeavours should consider the inclusion of such a question, in the same manner that this was posed in the qualitative study, “Is gender equality and happiness linked?” or “Does gender equality lead to happiness?”.

Whilst the quantitative component of the study was able to look intersectionally at race, class and age in relation to happiness, the qualitative study (which consisted of focus groups with laypersons and individual interviews with key informants) was limited in investigating these intersections in women’s constructions of gender equality and happiness. As a large number of my sample were gender experts, they brought in a critical reflection on the issues. These views may not be reflective of the views of a larger sample of women who are not gender experts. Furthermore, insufficient data was collected from the focus groups to have allowed for this comparison. I would therefore propose that future qualitative research look at gathering data from women positioned across race, class and age, to enable a more

comprehensive intersectional analysis in relation to constructions of gender equality and happiness.

Lastly, the focus of this study was on *women's* perceptions and experiences of gender equality and happiness. In order to get a more comprehensive understanding on the topic, it is recommended that a similar study is undertaken with men. This will provide a comprehensive picture of how interventions can be targetted more broadly to address gender inequalities, leading to happier, flourishing lives.

10.9 Conclusion

This study set out to investigate whether gender equality and happiness are linked, and whether one can have gender equality without happiness, and happiness without gender equality. The simple responses to these questions are Yes. However, as shown in this study, the outcomes are far more nuanced and complex. What is clear however, is that the struggle to ensure a more gender equitable society is ongoing and essential in ensuring flourishing lives. A final word: gender equality matters; happiness matters.

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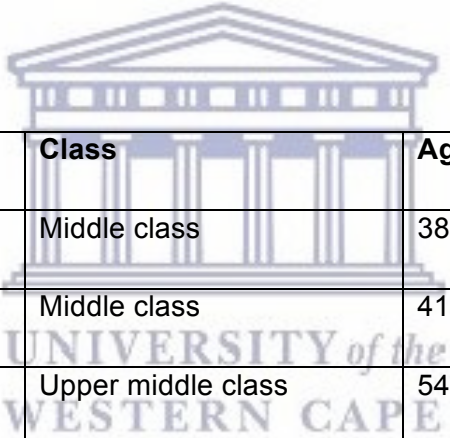


APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Interview participants

* Pseudonyms have been used to protect the identities of the participants

Key informants (qualitative individual interviews)



Name*	Race	Class	Age	Highest level of schooling
Zinzi	African	Middle class	38	Ph.D
Florence	Coloured	Middle class	41	Ph.D
Hannah	White	Upper middle class	54	Post doc
Amy	White	Upper middle class	57	Ph.D
Susan	White	Middle class	46	Under-graduate degree
Sandra	Coloured/African	Working class	53	B.Mus Ed
Palesa	African	Not indicated	Not indicated	Ph.D
Mandy	White	Middle class	44	Post-graduate degree

Candice	Coloured (Black)	Middle class	53	Ph.D
Grace	African	Upper middle class	41	Masters Degree
Kefilwe ⁷⁸				



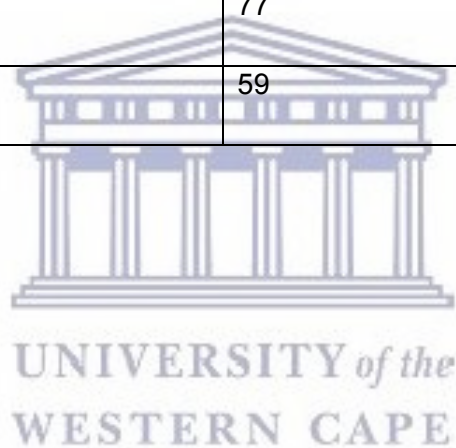
⁷⁸ Did not return the demographics form.

Focus group participants⁷⁹

Focus group teachers			
Race	Class	Age	Highest level of schooling
African	Working class	47	Post-graduate (Higher Diploma in Education)
Coloured	Middle class	27	B.Ed
Coloured	Working class	40	ACE
Coloured	Working class	45	Level 5 ECD
Other (Black)	Middle class	33	B.Ed
Coloured	Working class	52	3 year teacher's diploma
Coloured	Working class	30	B.Ed
Coloured	Working class	51	University degree
Community women			
Coloured	Working class	49	Grade 9
Coloured	Working class	39	Grade 10
Coloured	Working class	40	Grade 12

⁷⁹ There was a limitation in terms of recording the pseudonyms for participants, resulting in the participant's name not being attached to the demographics.

Coloured	Working class	24	Grade 12
Coloured	Working class	50	Grade 11
Coloured	Working class	63	Grade 7
Womens group: Church⁸⁰			
Not indicated	Working class	70	Grade 12
Coloured	Working class	77	Grade 10
Coloured	Working class	59	Grade 10



⁸⁰ Approximately five participants in the group did not complete the form.

Appendix 2: Individual interview schedule

Introduction

I am Carmine Rustin. I'm a PhD student in the Women's and Gender Studies Department at the University of the Western Cape. My studies are focused on women's experiences of gender equality and happiness. Thank you for agreeing to participate in my study. Participation is completely voluntary. If at any stage, you feel that you do not want to participate, this is fine. The discussion here is confidential and you'll remain anonymous. The results will be used for the sole purposes of my studies and may be used to publish.

[Information sheets and Consent Forms]

Schedule

1. 1994 ushered in a new democratic order. Since 1994, we have seen a plethora of legislative changes aimed at improving the lives of women. Perhaps we can start our discussion by looking at:

1. In your opinion, what have the changes in legislation meant for women in South Africa?
2. Personally, what have the changes in legislation meant in your life?
3. What does gender equality mean to you?
4. Can you share some of your experiences or examples of what gender equality symbolizes in your life?
5. Have we achieved gender equality in South Africa?

2. Happiness is defined by scholars as "overall enjoyment of your life as-a-whole". As indicated, I am interested in gender equality and happiness. In your experience, is gender equality and happiness related or linked?

3. Can we have gender equality without happiness or happiness without gender equality?

4. Keeping the definition of happiness in mind, how would you define happiness in your life? What does happiness mean to you? Are you happy?

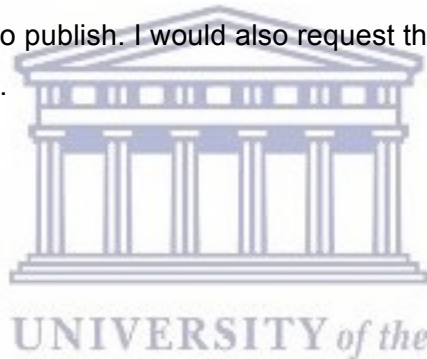


Appendix 3: Focus group interview schedule

Focus group questions

Introduction

I am Carmine Rustin. I'm a PhD student in the Women's and Gender Studies Department at the University of the Western Cape. My studies are focused on women's experiences of gender equality and happiness. Thank you for agreeing to participate in my study. Participation is completely voluntary. If at any stage, you feel that you do not want to participate, this is fine. The discussion here is confidential and you'll remain anonymous. The results will be used for the sole purposes of my studies and may be used to publish. I would also request that participants respect the confidentiality of the group.



[Consent Forms]

1994 ushered in a new democratic order. Since 1994, we have seen a plethora of legislative changes aimed at improving the lives of women. Perhaps we can start our discussion by looking at:

1. What has the changes in legislation has meant in your lives?
2. What does gender equality mean to you?
3. Can you share some of your experiences or examples of what gender equality symbolizes in your life?
4. Have we achieved gender equality in South Africa?

Happiness is defined by scholars as “overall enjoyment of your life as-a-whole”. Keeping this definition on mind, how would you define happiness in your life? Are you happy? What does happiness mean to you?

As indicated, I am interested in gender equality and happiness. In your experience, is gender equality and happiness related or linked?

Can we have gender equality without happiness or happiness without gender equality?



Focus group questions: Afrikaans

Inleiding

Ek is Carmine Rustin. Ek is 'n doktrale kandidaat in die "Women's and Gender Studies Department" by die Universiteit van Wes Kaapland. My studie fokus op vrouens se ervaringe van geslagsgelykheid en blydschap. Dankie dat julle ingestem het om deel te neem in my studie. Julle deelname is vrywillig. Op enige stadium, as u voel dat u nie wil deelneem nie, is dit in die haak. Die gesprek hier vandag is konfidentieel en u identiteit sal anonym bly. Die resultate sal uitsluitlik vir my studies gebruik word. Ek vra ook aseblyf dat die groep se gesprek konfidentieel gehou sal word aseblyf.

[Consent Forms]



Vrae

'n Nuwe demokratiese regering is in 1994 aangebring. Sedert dien, is daar 'n aantal nuwe wette aan die hand gebring wat daarop gemik is om vrouens se lewens te verbeter. Miskien kan ons ons gesprek begin deur om te kyk:

1. Wat het die veranderinge in wette in jou lewe beteken?
2. Wat beteken geslagsgelykheid vir jou?
3. Kan u asb u ervaringe of voorbeelde van geslagsgelykheid in jou lewe met ons deel?
4. Het ons geslagsgelykheid in SA behaal?

Skoliere/student is van mening dat gelukkigheid/blydschap beskryf kan word as 'n algehele blydschap / genotvol op alle vlakke van die lewe is. As u dit in gedagte hou,

hoe sal u blydschap in u lewe beskryf? Wat beteken blyskap vir u? Hoe gelukkig is u met u lewe oor die algeheel?

Soos ek aangedui het, stel ek belang in blydschap en geslagsgelykheid. In u ervaring, is daar 'n verwantskap tussen geslagsgelykheid en blydschap of nie?

Kan ons geslagsgelykheid sonder blydschap hê? Of blydschap sonder geslagsgelykheid?

Baie dankie vir U deelname. Ek waardeer dit.



FACULTY OF ARTS

Women's and Gender Studies

1 November 2014

INFORMATION SHEET

Research on: Women's experiences of gender equality and happiness

This study looks at whether gender equality makes women happy and whether you can have gender equality without happiness? 1994 ushered in a democratic South Africa and numerous legislative and policy changes were introduced that affect women. Considerable gains have been made at a constitutional and political level for women's equality and gender justice. This is reflected in the rankings of South Africa on many different indices. This includes the Global Gender Index (2012) where South Africa ranks 16th on the Index. South Africa furthermore ranks within the top 10 countries on the Inter-Parliamentary Union rankings of the number of women in Parliament. Yet, we see numerous challenges facing women including poverty and gender-based violence.

This part of the study is intended to explore individual South African women's subjective experiences of gender equality and how South African women define happiness in their lives and whether they believe it is linked to gender equality.

This study is being run by Ms C. Rustin, under the supervision of Prof T. Shefer, in the Women's and Gender Studies Department, Faculty of Arts at UWC.

Participation in the research is totally voluntary and you should only do so if you fully understand the aims of the research and would like to participate in this research. If you agree to participate in the individual interview, you will be required to sign a consent form at the beginning of the interview that will protect you and inform you of

your rights as a research participant. I look forward to having you participate in individual interview if you so decide.

Contact details: Carmine Rustin, crustin@parliament.gov.za; phone: 0839667669



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1 November 2014

INFORMATION SHEET

Research on: Women's experiences of gender equality and happiness

This study looks at whether gender equality makes women happy and whether you can have gender equality without happiness? 1994 ushered in a democratic South Africa and numerous legislative and policy changes were introduced that affect women. Considerable gains have been made at a constitutional and political level for women's equality and gender justice. This is reflected in the rankings of South Africa on many different indices. This includes the Global Gender Index (2012) where South Africa ranks 16th on the Index. South Africa furthermore ranks within the top 10 countries on the Inter-Parliamentary Union rankings of the number of women in Parliament. Yet, we see numerous challenges facing women including poverty and gender-based violence.

This part of the study is intended to explore a group of South African women's subjective experiences of gender equality and how a group of South African women define happiness in their lives and whether they believe it is linked to gender equality.

This study is being run by Ms C. Rustin, under the supervision of Prof T. Shefer, in the Women's and Gender Studies Department, Faculty of Arts at UWC.

Participation in the research is totally voluntary and you should only do so if you fully understand the aims of the research and would like to participate in this research. If you agree to participate in the focus group discussion, you will be required to sign a consent form at the beginning of the focus group discussion that will protect you and inform you of your rights as a research participant. I look forward to having you participate in the focus group discussions if you so decide.

Contact details: Carmine Rustin, crustin@parliament.gov.za; phone: 0839667669



Appendix 6: Consent form



Consent form

University of the Western Cape

Women's experiences of gender equality and happiness

Researcher: Ms. Carmine Rustin

Please initial box

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet explaining the above research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline. (If I wish to withdraw I may contact the lead researcher at anytime)
3. I understand my responses and personal data will be kept strictly confidential. I give permission for members of the research team to have access to my anonymised responses.
I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials, and I will not be identified or identifiable in the reports or publications that result for the research.
4. As a participant of the discussion, I will not discuss or divulge information shared by others in the group or the researcher outside of this group.
5. I agree for the data collected from me to be used in future research.

6. I agree for to take part in the above research project.

Name of Participant
(or legal representative)

Date

Signature

Name of person taking consent
(If different from lead researcher)

Date

Signature

Lead Researcher
(To be signed and dated in presence of the participant)

Date

Signature

Copies: All participants will receive a copy of the signed and dated version of the consent form and information sheet for themselves. A copy of this will be filed and kept in a secure location for research purposes only.

Researcher:
--

Supervisor:
--

HOD:

Appendix 7: Transcription conventions

[...]	When material is omitted from the speech or text
[with text]	Author's insertion
...	To indicate when speech text trails off
–	To indicate when speech shifts from one topic or point to another



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