

**THE EXPERIENCES OF FEMALE SPORT ADMINISTRATORS IN THE
WESTERN CAPE: GENDER BIAS IN THE WORKPLACE**

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ABSTRACT

Research indicates that the advancement of women into top management positions is steadily increasing. However, it seems as if gender divisions in the workforce do not encourage equal opportunities for women in the labor sector. In the world of sport, gender equity has been promoted with some progress. However, this progress, both globally and in South Africa, is still limited both quantitatively and qualitatively. There has been very little research on the experiences of women in leadership positions, specifically in the field of sport.

This study explored the experiences of female sports administrators in the workplace. This study employed a qualitative research methodology. Purposive sampling was used to select suitable candidates in the field of sport and recreation in the Western Cape, South Africa. Data was collected by using semi-structured interviews and data was analysed using thematic analysis.

Results indicate that participants in this study experience gender bias in the workplace in terms of differential treatment, organizational fit and harassment and intimidation. Conclusions and recommendations are also offered.

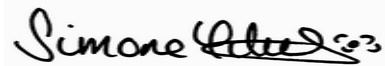
Keywords: Gender bias, administration, experiences, perceptions, leadership, gender-role stereotyping, South Africa

DECLARATION

I declare that *The Experiences of Female Sport Administrators in the Western Cape: Gender Bias in the Workplace* 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.

Full name: SIMONE TITUS

Date 28 November 2008

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Simone Titus" with a stylized flourish at the end.

Signed



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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to Study

Women in sport: Past and present

In the history of South Africa, sportswomen played a major role in the resistance movement in the struggle to liberate this country from apartheid, especially during the 1980's and 1990's. According to Roberts (1993), Hargreaves (1997) and Jones (2001) South African sportswomen used sport¹ as site of resistance against racism and sexism. Unity talks in South African sport took place between 1988 and 1994. These talks led to the synchronisation of all South African sport codes across the racial divides, apparent in this country at that time. Against this backdrop, the status of women in sport in South Africa changed dramatically and has continued to do so as women have become more visible, despite their limited access to sport, especially at leadership level. Among these women are Cheryl Roberts, ex-Olympian and women's sport activist and now writer and publisher of '*South Africa Sportswoman*', Sindi Gumedi, national netball shooter, Desiree Ellis former women's national soccer captain who led the way in helping women's soccer raise its profile in South Africa and Portia Modise the current women's national soccer captain. Today, racial divides no longer exist as this country has been liberated from an oppressive government. However, this does not mean that gender equity exists in South African sport nor that

¹ The term **sport** is an all encompassing term used to describe all types of different types of physical activities and associated business. **Sports** is a term used to describe a list of activities such as netball, hockey, soccer, volleyball etc. (Parks, Quaterman & Thibault, 2007). Therefore, for the purposes of this study, the term **sport** will be used.

top sportswomen are spared discriminatory experiences. They are still exploited by subtle and overt discrimination in sport in society.

South African sport policies and equality procedures

Today, the South African constitution prides itself on the fact that it guarantees everyone the right to equality and equal opportunities. Since the birth of democracy in 1994, gender inequality in sport in South Africa has been legislated against by a number of constitutionally binding acts. These include the National Sport and Recreation Act, 110 of 1998, The South African Sports Commission Act, 109 of 1998 and The South African Government's White Paper on Sport and Recreation (1997). Priority 4A in the South African Government's White Paper: Sport and Recreation referred to as: 'South Africa- Getting the Nation to Play', encourages all national sport federations to develop programs that would "remove barriers that may prevent women from vocations in training, administration, coaching, and sport and recreation management" (Republic of South Africa, 1997:11). The South African government sector has to a large extent developed policies and constitutionally binding acts which have impacted positively on the gender equity situation in the country (South African Sports Commission, 2004).

All of these developments are an indication that the intention of the South African government is to not only create awareness around gender inequality in sport, but also to remove barriers which limit women's access to sport. This is, as it should be,

because governmental policies as well as politicians should be the main cohorts in advocating and promoting gender inequality in sport.

A particular concern to the proponents of gender equality is that on a governmental level as well as within sport, there is a tendency in South Africa to focus on class and racial dynamics in sport at the cost of gender issues, especially at a level of leadership and management (Jones, 2001). In addition, there is a tendency to treat women as recipients of state policies rather than agents in the construction of new state (Seidman, 1999). Although, the South African government has shown its support for the empowerment of women in management positions, research indicates that there are still too few women in senior management and leadership positions in sport within government (South African Sports Commission, 2004).



After the Beijing National Conference in 1995, the South African government has given South African women support in their quest to gain equality with their male counterparts (Phaahla, 2000). The South African Women, Sport and Recreation (2003) provided a framework of the transformation guidelines which should direct the policy regarding addressing gender inequality in sport and recreation in South Africa. In the policy it is indicated that; a) in designing empowerment programmes for women in sport, one should be mindful that women differ according to factors such as race, disability, class, culture, sexual orientation and geographical location, b) government funded initiatives and structures should present prospects to everyone to enjoy and practice his or her cultural, religious and customary beliefs without

discrimination on the basis of gender, c) the National Policy Framework on the empowerment of women should be sustained by relevant structures, programmes, projects and/or initiatives, d) The policy should be consistent with the Brighton (1994) and Windhoek (1998) Declarations, e) Benchmarks must be set to evaluate progress on gender equity and equality in sport and recreation and f) safety and security of women within the context of sport should be not be neglected (South African Women, Sport and Recreation, 2003).

In a working document compiled by the South African Women, Sport and Recreation (South African Women Sport and Recreation, 2003), research indicated that even though legislation regarding the promotion of gender equality has been passed, it has not been as successful as anticipated by the South African government. Furthermore, it was stated that the lack of intervention such as motivational programmes as well as affirmative policies, could possibly have a negative impact on gender equality in sport. In the same document, it was also highlighted that women in sport administration often filled lower positions while men were in higher positions.

Research conducted by the Rand Afrikaans University, under the auspices of the South African Sports Commission (2004), has found that the under-representation of women in decision making positions could be attributed to gender stereotyping. These findings echo those of Curry and Jiobu (1984:161) who commented, namely “by attributing certain traits to women, gender-role stereotyping helps justify the exclusion of women in many realms of life”. The needs of women should be

addressed to challenge gender inequality and institute women in their rightful place in sport and in society (South African Women Sport and Recreation, 2003).

Transformation within social institutions where men construct their power and privilege over others has matched the general absence of women in decision making positions (Messner as cited in Hargreaves, 1997). This reflects deep seated power imbalances between men and women in South Africa. In 1993 Roberts claimed that most South African sport bodies are controlled by men, including media and sport participation (Roberts, 1993). Consequently, few women hold executive positions in national sporting bodies in South Africa. This was still the situation ten years later as shown by Jones (2003) who found similarly in her research that women still did not play a significant role in decision making because sport in South Africa is dominated by men. Previously in 2001 Jones (2001) also indicated that only about 47% of sport federations associated with the National Sports Council have recognized women's sporting desks which had been established to promote gender equality in South African sport. Although transformation in South Africa focuses on reducing inequality on a broad scale, gender inequality in sport has fortunately been addressed indirectly as a result of this. There is no doubt that the implementation of equal opportunity policies in South Africa has resulted in the advancement of women into leadership positions, but it would be naïve to assume that much has been done to enforce the implementation of such policies. Jones (2001) eluded this in her doctoral thesis. In addition, since sport is seen as a male dominated arena (Hargreaves, 1997),

there a paucity of evidence pertaining to female sport administrators experiences in leadership positions in South Africa.

However, despite all the policies and legislation, gender equity has still not been achieved in South African sport. There are still some issues which should be explored to shed more light on this situation. This study will contribute to this exploration by focussing on how female sport leaders experience gender bias in their (sport) workplace.

International forums influencing sport in South Africa

Various international declarations have provided principles for policy development with regard to gender equality in general and sport specifically. South Africa has drawn on these to address gender inequality in its sport domain. These include the Beijing Platform for Action, The Brighton Declaration of 1994, The Windhoek Declaration of 1998 and The Magglingen Declaration.

The Brighton Declaration and the Windhoek Platform for Action (Women's Sports Foundation, 1998:1) focused on "Governments, public authorities, organisations, businesses, educational and research establishments, women's organisations and individuals responsible for, or who directly or indirectly influence, the conduct, development or promotion of sport or who are in any way involved in the employment, education, management, training, development or care of women in sport". These Declarations were meant to complement all sporting, local, national

and international charters, laws, codes, rules and regulations relating to women or sport.

The overriding aim of the Brighton Declaration is "To develop a sporting culture that enables and values the full involvement of women in every aspect of sport" (Lyons & Lyons, 1998:40). This Declaration indicates that women are under-represented in the leadership and decision making in all sport and sport-related organisations across the world. It goes on to state that those responsible for these areas in sport should develop policies and programmes and design structures which increase the number of women coaches, advisers, decision makers, officials, administrators and sport personnel at all levels with special attention given to recruitment, development and retention.

The Windhoek Declaration of 1998 calls for gender equality to permeate all levels of the peacekeeping missions. In turn, the Namibia Plan of Action which is outlined by The International Working Group on Women and Sport (2002) was hosted by the ministry of Youth and Sport in Namibia (in September, 1998) and was attended by 400 delegates from 74 countries (including South Africa), provides specific and detailed recommendations for integrating gender into sport worldwide and for ensuring the participation of women in specific areas in sport, such as leadership and planning. This can be achieved by developing appropriate policies, structures and mechanisms which ensure that all women and girls have the opportunity to participate in sport.

The Magglingen Declaration (2005) focuses on the role of sport and development and was signed in Switzerland in 2003. Following the Magglingen Conference at which this Declaration was signed, an international platform for sport and development was established bringing together representatives from the United Nations, international and national sport federations. The Magglingen Declaration defines sport as a human right. It also acknowledges that there is a lack of female role sporting models, including coaches and leaders. It highlights the fact that women are underrepresented in decision making bodies of sporting institutions across the world. It claims that increased participation by women would diversify the talent pool of administrators, coaches and officials and be to the advantage of the sporting world.

In South Africa

South Africa drew upon international policies and declaration in its attempts at intervention to address gender inequalities in South African sport.

Women and Sport South Africa (WASSA) was formed as an initiative from the then Department of Sport and Recreation (DSR) and the former National Sports Council (NSC) to be a governmental structure for addressing gender inequality in South African sport. It was launched in 1996. The specific purpose of this structure was to address the shortage of girls and women in sport and recreation and to promote their development in the sporting domain. One emphasis was on empowering them for the best possible access for participation in sport and recreation (South African Women Sport and Recreation, 2003). During the 1990's WASSA was one of the key

promoters of policy formulation and implementation in South Africa. It initiated some gender equity programmes after realising that National Federations (NF's) were not making any significant advances in addressing gender issues in South African sport. WASSA's aim was to focus on inequality and to empower women and girls for active participation in sport and recreation. Although WASSA is no longer functional, this does not mean that gender issues in South Africa are no longer addressed. Currently, the South African Women Sport and Recreation (SAWSAR) are at the forefront of policy implementation which addresses gender issues in sport. Notwithstanding all these efforts, unfortunately, gender bias still exists in sport organisations across South Africa and is clearly evident at the level of top management. Should transformation not be addressed, then neither will gender equity and, consequently, gender bias in South African sport.



According to Davis (2003) gender bias is demonstrated in the form of differential treatment toward one sex over the other. It also refers to the apparent non-achievement of women as a result of not being given equal opportunities. In South Africa, although more women play sports such as the traditional women's sport of netball and softball, men can still be found in leadership positions in these sporting codes. The same cannot be said for women leaders in the traditional male sports of rugby, soccer and cricket. In addition, in the majority of other sports, the gender bias is in favour of the men. Not only do men hold the top leadership positions, but entry into decision making positions in the majority of South African sporting codes is extremely difficult for women. In most sport, women perceive themselves as

constantly being in an uninterrupted struggle with men and there is a tendency to allude to a rigid system of male domination about the intensity of male prejudice, and the resentment, chauvinism and coercion they experience from their male counterparts (Hargreaves, 1997). Furthermore, the lack of female leaders in sport and recreation in South Africa impacts on the under-representation of women in leadership positions. One possible reason is that women perceive that they did not have leaders as role models (South African Sports Commission, 2004). This situation reflects the inconsistencies and gaps between policy and practice with regard to gender equity in South African sport.

Statistical evidence

Statistical data highlights the progress, or lack thereof by female managers with regard the advancement of women into leadership and management positions globally.

The annual Grant Thornton International Business Owners Survey (South Africa, 2004), revealed that although 60% of companies surveyed internationally, included at least one woman in a senior management position, only 19% of women occupy available senior management posts.

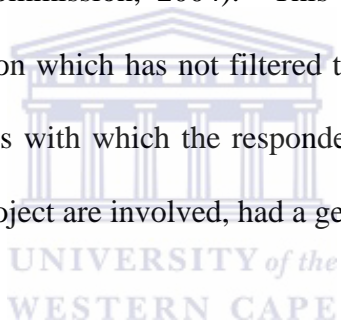
Similarly, although women in Jamaica make up close to 50% of the labour force and have increasingly advanced into many of the senior and middle manager positions, there are still very few women in the highest positions particularly in the male dominated field of politics (Harman, 2006). Contrary to women in Jamaica, women

in the United States of America hold only 20% of total senior management jobs even though 75% of businesses employ women in senior management positions, while Russia is the only country to have move towards gender equity, with 42% of all management posts held by women (South Africa, 2004)

South Africa is rated third highest in the world when it comes to the proportion of companies who employ women in senior management positions, beating the global average by 16%. Twenty six percent of total senior management posts in South Africa are filled by women, placing South Africa eighth in the world, beating the global average by 7% (South Africa, 2004). Despite this, The Employment Equity Commission in South Africa showed that women are inadequately represented across all sectors of the economy and at management level. Eighty-seven percent of all top management positions in businesses are held by men and 80% of all senior management positions are held by men (Garson, 2005). These findings are contradictory to that of Grant Thornton (South Africa, 2004) as it is evident from the above that most senior management positions in South Africa are still held by men.

Results from the Catalyst Census into South African Women in Corporate Leaders (Catalyst, 2004) indicated that of the 3125 directorship positions in the country, only 221 are held by women. Only 11 women hold chairs of boards out of a total of 364 and there are only seven female Chief Executive Officers (CEO's) and managing directors in comparison to 357 males. The CEO of the Businesswomen Association

of South Africa (2004:1), Niven Postma said: “while women make up 52% of the adult population in South Africa, they make up only 14.7 % of all executive managers and only 7.1% of all directors in the country.” The above figures were then compared with those of Australia, the United States of America and Canada. The figures represented 8.4%, 13.6% and 11.2% respectively. While a small number of women experienced little or no or had less access to resources to which they had had prior to 1994, statistics on women in sport in South Africa revealed that on average, 16.5% of women received training, and only 12% experienced an increase in gender equality (South African Sports Commission, 2004). This could be as a result of macro policies and implementation which has not filtered through to organisations, as only 41% of sport organisations with which the respondents of the South African Sports Commission’s research project are involved, had a gender policy in place.



The appointment of approximately 30% females in national government in South Africa held significant symbolic meaning for the empowerment of women and recognition of gender (South African Sports Commission, 2004). In government, most provinces reached a representation of 30% by women in provincial cabinet, while national cabinet has reached a figure of 45% representation by women (Nel, 2005). Garson (2005) indicated that 33% of our parliamentarians in South Africa are women. This places South Africa, which was previously ranked number 141 in the world, at number eight in the world in terms of gender equality in government. Furthermore, 9 out of 27 cabinet ministers and 9 out of 14 deputy ministers are women. South Africa is one of only three African countries to have female presiding

officers in the house of parliament. Both the Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces and the Speaker of the National Assembly are women. It is evident that progress has been made with regard to the advancement of women in leadership positions in government.

However, this degree of equity has not been achieved for women in sport. In addition, much research has been conducted on the statistical trends of gender equality in the workplace, but not much has been documented on the experiences of female sport administrators. This study will attempt to highlight the experiences of female sport administrators' experiences of gender bias in their places of work.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Gender bias in this study is associated with the manner in which females within their sport organisations have to work harder to achieve top leadership positions, deal with issues regarding harassment and intimidation as well as men's resistance to women entering specific sporting codes and making decisions. It also includes issues around tokenism, organisational fit and gender-role stereotyping. Unless issues around gender bias are addressed by various stakeholders in sport, it will continue to exist in sport organisations and women in sport be continuously discriminated against. One challenge for women in sport, as well as the researcher is the lack of understanding of the way in which women interpret and experience gender bias in the workplace.

1.3 Research Question

The question guiding this study is “What are female sport administrators’ experiences of gender bias in their places of work?”

1.4 Aim of Study

Research indicates that female administrators in sport experience various forms of discrimination in the form of gender bias, whether explicit or subtle. This study aims to explore the experiences of female sport administrators concerning gender bias in their places of work.

1.5 Specific Objective of Study

Consistent with the main aim of the study, the specific objective guiding this research is to explore the experiences of female sport administrators with regards to gender bias in the workplace

1.6 Significance of the study

The South African constitution established the right of everyone to equality as well as prohibiting all forms of discrimination on the basis of gender. Therefore, the right of females to equal opportunities to access top sport positions has to be brought to fruition. Research by the South African Sports Commission (2004) showed that after ten years of democracy, there is still an absence of women in top positions in sport. This absence has been inextricably linked to gender inequality. Gender bias is one example of gender inequality. It is therefore crucial to know more about women’s

interpretations and experiences of gender bias in order to offer recommendations to improve the situation. This study could assist all sporting bodies in all sport codes to effectively address gender bias in South African sport and consequently to increase the number of women in leadership positions in sport.

1.7 Research Methodology (Summarised)

A more detailed discussion on the methodological considerations is offered in Chapter 3. What follows is a brief description of the methodological considerations in order to provide the reader with an overview of the relationship between the purpose of this study and the research approach and methods adopted.

In order to effectively explore female sport administrators' experiences of gender bias in their places of work, the researcher adopted a research method, which would best allow the female participants² in this study to articulate their experiences in their own words. Hence a qualitative approach has been adopted. The findings of this study have been interpreted within the sociological perspective of the critical theory. The critical theory has been utilized to highlight how most people interested in sport, are aware of who dominated sport culture in their societies and not only seem to acknowledge and give value to this, but also accept this as a given. In addition, critical theory allows for the possibility that conflict and agreement can exist

² The word **participant(s)** will be used throughout this study to refer to the women who were interviewed because this is a qualitative study, and the questions were predominantly open-ended. In addition, numerous quotations are used to ensure that their voices are heard as participants in this study and not as respondents in a questionnaire.

simultaneously, that shared values are ever changing and that basis for conflict changes.

In this study, four top South African female sport administrators were interviewed with regard to their experiences of gender bias in their places of work. Semi-structured face-to-face interviews were the method used. Data was analysed using a thematic analysis. Refer to Chapter 3 for a detailed description of the research methods used in this study.

1.8 Interpretation of Key Terms

Gender Bias is a concept which highlights non-achievement especially of women due to them not having equal opportunities. It is manifested in the form of differential treatment toward one sex over the other (Davis, 2003). Davis (2003) further suggested that gender-role stereotyping, which is a form of gender bias, is directly related to the traditional beliefs about sex differences.

Differential Treatment is a form of discrimination based on race, religion, age, origin disability and gender (Weiler, 2004). More specifically, differential treatment in sport organisations can be linked to the differences in the acknowledgment of the females' views, comments and suggestions compared to their male counterparts. This is evident, for example, when males comment repeatedly about their female counterparts' bodies and whether female sport administrators are taken as seriously as

their male counterparts with regard to the way they are valued and their contribution to the organisation for example, at committee meetings.

Organisational Fit refers to the level of comfort or discomfort experienced by men and women in their organisations (Cassel & Walsh cited in Simpson, 2000). Furthermore, it highlights how the imbalances within different hierarchical levels shape the experiences of men and women further down the hierarchy. It concerns the way in which women complement an organisation especially one which is male dominated. Organisational fit also takes into account tokenism, as well as the exclusion of women (and sometimes men) from the discussion of certain issues, men's resistance to women's entry into certain sport, women's (and sometimes men's) ability to make decisions and take authority at work and whether or not women have to work harder to prove their capabilities in the sporting domain.

Gender-role stereotyping refers to gender roles that are culturally, historically and socially defined values of social interactions between males and females (Moran, 2005). She suggests that these values shape our assumptions about gender and gender categories. Davis (2003) suggested that gender-role stereotyping is directly related to the traditional beliefs about sex differences that can lead to unequal treatment. This unequal treatment results in fewer women attaining leadership positions in male dominated arenas such as sport. It refers to gendered roles ascribed to men and women within social and cultural constructs.

Tokenism is referred to as a form of interclass mobility within a gender-class system which could be used to explain the difficulties women face as they enter predominantly male professions (Laws, 1975; Zimmer, 1988). A common perception is that men are viewed as leaders while women are believed to be accommodating supporters and therefore women's occupational experiences and their reaction to experiences of gender bias with reference to the proportion of women in an organisation can be viewed as tokenism.

Harassment claims Weiler (2004) created an offensive environment through unwelcomed, verbal, non-verbal and physical behaviour of a (sexual) nature. It is any form of unwanted and unasked for deeds which may range from repulsive remarks, physical contact to acts of violence. Examples included: unwelcomed suggestive remarks, insults, assault, innuendos, obscene gestures and jokes and comments about gender specific traits.

1.9 Overview of Chapters

This chapter provided an introduction to the study, the motivation thereof and outlined the research aim and objective as well as the significance of the study. Firstly, it very briefly indicated past research conducted on women in sport in South Africa. A special section has not been dedicated in this thesis to past research on the topic of gender bias, however, literature on past research will be mentioned at pertinent places throughout the thesis, especially in Chapters Two and Four. This chapter then it highlighted the South African government's attempts at creating an

awareness of gender inequality and provided evidence that internationally and nationally, gender bias is being addressed yet there is evidence that it still exist within sport organisation across the country. This chapter also provided some statistics around the position of women in leadership positions. In this chapter, relevant international and national policies and international declarations were mentioned. In this chapter it was also pointed out that although many international policies have provided a framework upon which South African policies are based and that the intentions regarding gender equality of the South African government are noteworthy, implementation of such policies have been inadequate. An interpretation of key themes and an insight into the methodological considerations were also provided.

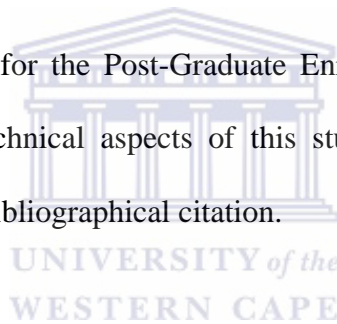
Chapter Two, which follows, provides a literature review focusing on women's experiences of gender bias with regard to differential treatment, organisational fit, gender-role stereotyping, decision making and tokenism. Furthermore, gender bias from a sociological perspective will focus on the critical theory.

Chapter Three describes the methodological considerations used in this study. It outlines the research approach followed by an explanation of the methods of data collection including, selection of participants, description of the research setting, and an overview of the data collection setting which includes, procedures adopted, trustworthiness and reflexivity, a description data and finally, ethical considerations are mentioned.

Chapter Four is a presentation of results and findings of this research study in a qualitative thematic form. It discusses the participants' experiences and interpretations of gender bias in the workplace. It also shows the researcher's efforts to interpret the findings from a sociological perspective using the critical theory.

Chapter Five offers conclusions and recommendations with regard to gender bias in the workplace based on the findings of this study and in this regard suggest recommendations for future studies.

The UWC Thesis Guide for the Post-Graduate Enrolment and Throughput Project (PET) has guided the technical aspects of this study while the APA referencing method was adopted for bibliographical citation.



CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a literature review relating to the position of women in administrative positions in general and then in sporting organisations in particular. The literature overview covers the full aspects of gender bias i.e. differential treatment, organisational fit, gender-role stereotyping, decision making and tokenism, while the sociological framework focuses on the critical theory. According to Maxwell (2006:28), a literature review in a dissertation is 'intended to inform a planned study'. Consequently, the literature review for this study provides the framework for the data collection and for substantiating and interpreting the findings.

2.2 Female administrators' experiences of gender bias

This section will discuss female administrators' experience of gender bias in South Africa and abroad. Several studies have been conducted to explore the experiences of women.


2.2.1 Differential treatment

While not clearly documented, there is support that suggests that female administrators, cross-culturally, are more alike than disparate in their demographic and personal characteristics and gender-based discrimination and segregation (Gregory cited in Nath, 2000). Acosta and Carpenter (2003) indicated that women are subjected to differential treatment based on gender. Women who work in male

dominated arenas are taught to be assertive and objective whereas men in managerial positions are taught to be sensitive to the needs of women to eliminate overt differential treatment. Men still dominate leading management positions in companies listed on the Tel-Aviv-25 Index, the few women in Jerusalem holding senior roles indicate that they do not feel discriminated against on their way to the top (Wrobel, 2006). However, this directly contradicts findings by Corcoran-Nantes and Roberts (2002) who indicated that the participants in their study claimed that they were not taken as seriously as their male counterparts.

One reason for women not being taken seriously could possibly be attributed to sex segregation in the workplace, which impacts negatively on the advancement of women into leadership positions. This is a gender bias based on differential treatment of women not only in sport but in every aspect of management. Reskin (2002) suggested that sex segregation in the workplace impedes women's chances of taking advantage of their authority at work. Furthermore, she claims that sex segregation plays a vital role in the income difference/remuneration between the sexes. She also states that many businesses employ women in top management positions in order to curtail expenses, as it is a method whereby businesses could pay women less remuneration than their male counterparts for doing the same work. In this way companies would save some money by placing women into positions previously held by men, but with less remuneration. This treatment of women impacts on the biasness they experience in the workplace. Similarly, McDonald (2004) reported that although the perspective of women's employment has altered, women have both similar and

different experiences to their predecessors. According to McDonald (2004) one area of women's work experiences which has changed little since the 19th century, is that of remuneration and women continue to get paid less than men. Williams (2002) added credence to the above arguments and adds that men are rewarded for their innate manly qualities by means of higher salaries, as opposed to women. According to Elsass and Graves (cited in Hau Siu Chow & Crawford, 2004), women are reported to have less access to a number of resources, such as income, than men. This they believe has led to their exclusion from information systems, because of sex segregation and also to a lack of recognition for their achievements.



According to the South African Sports Commission (2004) human capital is required in different sport and recreation sectors in South African as it demonstrates the diverse nature of social involvement and development. However, respondents in this study which covered the period 1994-2004 indicated that they felt that there is less access for women to advance into leadership positions in sport than men. Similarly in the United States, the period between 1996 and 2004 showed a slight decline in sport administrator's managerial positions held by women in Canada. In addition to this, women earned only 71% in relation to their male counterparts (Global National, 2006)

Coakley (1998:227) attributed one of the reasons as to why there is an under-representation to the fact that women have the perception that athletic sport organisations have 'corporate cultures' that do not make available space for those

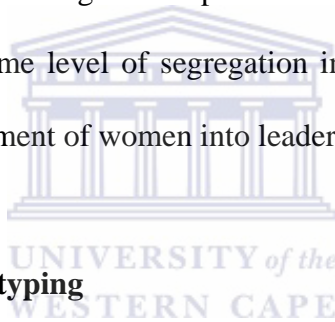
who see and think sport differently to the men who have conventional ways of seeing and thinking about sport. He also claims that women do not have strategic professional connections and networks when seeking employment and are seen as less qualified as their male counterparts, mainly because the employment committees use a subjective evaluative criterion.

Connell (2006) claimed that females were three times more likely to have their views discarded at departmental meetings than their male counterparts. Connell (2006) did however find that some (women) said that they have never experienced gender discrimination and that their career plans of rising to the top are done on the same terms as men. However, the women who did feel discriminated against have complained of sexist condemnation and examples of repeated jokes against women include being felt up, stared at, having their bodies commented upon and nor being taken seriously as co-workers. The South African Sports Commission (2004) reported that for women in South Africa, in general, the new democracy seems to have mainly contributed to the creation of opportunities and an awareness of human rights.

Although reports by Hau Siu Chow and Crawford (2004) suggested that there is no substantial difference between males and females relating to the acknowledgment of their views at committee meetings, they claim that some women choose to remain silent in meetings if they sense their point of view does not correspond with the men in the organisation and was not treated with same degree of reverence. Further to this, Jackson (2001) indicated that women's ideas are repeatedly reduced or ignored and

although the dynamics fluctuate there is some indication that on a more extreme level, women encountered blatant resistance which included sexist bullying or hostile behaviour. Overt resistance may take the form of unwarranted joviality and mockery which then acts as key criteria for exclusion and demarcating women as outcasts if they fail to fully participate (Simpson, 2000).

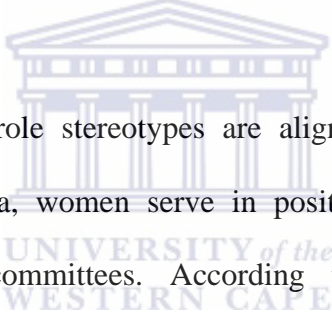
From the above, it appears that the remuneration for women is less in comparison with men, when appointed in the same management position. There is some evidence that some women have had negative experiences in management positions. More specifically, if there is some level of segregation in the workplace this will impact negatively on the advancement of women into leadership positions.



2.2.2 Gender-Role stereotyping

Gender roles imposed on women can lead to the exclusion of women from many realms of life. Women are seen as passive compared to men who are seen as aggressive (Curry & Jiobu, 1984). This gender bias is based on the gender roles ascribed to men and women within social and cultural constructs. Jackson (2001) found that some women reported most encouraging organisational experiences regarding perceptions about stereotyping. This suggests that some women do believe that men in their organisations respect them as potential leaders and do not support stereotypical beliefs about women in the workplace.

According to Liddle and Joshi (cited in Nath, 2000), women are not given free access to financial and information resources. They are mistakenly stereotyped as being less knowledgeable, less able to meet the demands of the job and less competent than men. Nath (2000) further explains that women in general have to work harder than men to get the same results. Further to this, the gender roles ascribed to women through patriarchal ideology classify women as inferior to and reliant on men and their primary gender-role directives are seen as child bearers, home-makers and sex objects (Eitzen & Sage, 1997). The perception of women as followers rather than leaders is strengthened by a lack of powerful female role models (Jackson, 2001).



In South Africa, gender-role stereotypes are aligned with the fact that in most provinces in South Africa, women serve in positions with less power on sport executive boards and committees. According to the South African Sports Commission (2004), in several provinces in South Africa, women are elected as secretaries and treasurers where they are inundated with administrative tasks and with relatively limited decision making power. Although selection criteria should be based on personal characteristics, leadership abilities and expertise, gender bias is practised in the workplace of many sport administrators in South Africa as a result of the gender roles which are ascribed to them. These stereotypical beliefs are perpetuated in workplace of female sport leaders as gender stereotypes of women as leaders are still detectable in many sport organisations (Klene cited in Jackson, 2001).

When considering women's abilities in the workplace, one has to be cognisant of how their daily activities as administrators are compared with those of males. In this regard, Foster (1999) claims that management is an activity which is associated with male stereotypical attributes of competitiveness, hostility and rationality. While there are deep-rooted power structures in modern society, this association places men in central and women in subordinate positions. In Foster's (1999) view power derived from capability rather than position is the primary power base which bestows an individual with legitimate authority.

The South African Sports Commission (2004) found that women in sport in South Africa expressed a need for an all-encompassing functional representative to provide guidance and leadership and to promote gender equality in all sectors under the patronage of a governmental body. Jackson (2001) indicated that the perception that men are considered as leaders within their organisations and women are seen as supportive followers and not only are they excluded from informal groups, but from vital meetings where decisions are made.

Another finding of The South African Sports Commission (2004) was that not all women benefited equally from a change of government and constitutional transformation. It would seem that white women were relatively disadvantaged as precedence was given to the development of women from other racial denominations. White women in South Africa were of the opinion that a lot of valuable experience

and expertise had consequently been disregarded (South African Sports Commission, 2004)

This could be seen as another gender related barrier of personal and professional style. Ragins (cited in Jackson, 2001) reported a huge number of female executives felt that they had to acquire a professional style with which male managers would be satisfied. Women continue to report the need to work harder to prove themselves and to prove their credibility as managers. In this view, one could argue that white women in South Africa are no longer seen as credible managers as feel that they are disadvantaged, not only because of constitutional transformation, but because their professional style and experience is overlooked, not only by males, but is hampered by unequal access to opportunities. Notwithstanding the fact that male administrators dominate in the workplace, women have to acquire a style of management that would ultimately enhance their credibility and level of professionalism in the eyes of men, which are aligned with gender stereotypes.

The central message is that leadership is strongly embedded in gender stereotypes. Middlehurst (1997) reported that common perceptions of appropriate leadership behaviours also carry stereotypically masculine connotations such as dominance and autocracy, decisiveness, initiative, courage and control. The image of male leaders is often seen as heroic and creates a customary background which embraces traditionally masculine scenarios. Whitehead (2003) also indicated that cultural

associations between women and management feature in an ideal representation of the professional, with the construction of professionalism framed around masculinity.

By attributing certain traits to women in leadership positions, similar to those of males, gender-role stereotypes justify the exclusion of women as these stereotypes are so subtle and undetectable (Curry & Jiobu 1984). The debates around gender and management have been typically concerned with organisational practices which reproduce unequal representations of women and men in management posts (Newman, 2003). Findings in a research report on the Status of South African Women in Sport and Recreation conducted by Rand Afrikaans University, indicated that the under-representation of women in decision making positions in sport in South Africa is attributed to gender-role stereotyping by men and women, the absence of supportive networks and inadequate capacity building (SASC, 2004).

The above indicate that women are not given free access to financial and information resources. Furthermore, it is evident that gender-role stereotypes are detectable in organisations. In addition, gender roles which are ascribed to women are related to patriarchal ideologies which classify women as inferior.

2.2.3 Organisational Fit

Organisational fit is concerned with the way in which women complement an organisation especially one which is male dominated. Within male dominated areas, such as sport, lack of success reflects the reality of women's experiences in the workplace (Ellison, 2001), which could be as a result of organisational fit. Organisational fit refers to the level of comfort or discomfort experienced by women in their organisations (Cassel & Walsh cited in Simpson, 2000). This experience of comfort or discomfort is because of gender bias

Jackson (2001) claims that women are also less predisposed to proceed into leadership roles. She highlights that women are allocated with lower ranked tasks with less visibility and are not given a variety of jobs or special assignments which would enhance their visibility and expand their career. However, according to Ragins (cited in Jackson, 2001) women who move into higher positions become more discernible and unrestricted. There is a perception of a higher pressure to work harder than their male counterparts, and that their actions are more highly examined when they (women) move to higher positions.

Within existing organisational power structures, women may feel that organisations fashion or allow barriers which prevent them from feeling included in the power networks as well as the fact that hierarchical structures of most organisations prefer to maintain the status quo (Hau Siu Chow & Crawford, 2004). The formal authority structures of bureaucracies bequeath some positions with more power than. Most

people with significant hierarchical power are men. Even organisations with more females than male employees are usually controlled by men. In general, said Marvin (2001:188) ‘policies and practices include women’s lack of women’s power and opportunity in organisations, the existing sex ratio of groups, tokenism, the lack of mentors and sponsors and the denial of access to challenging assessments’.

This means that gender is accomplished against a backdrop of power as women in sport organisations lack power in formal authority structures, while men retain the most powerful positions.

It is only recently that writers on organisations have begun to consider their gendered nature and to recognise the limitations of a gender blind approach. While many organisations are able to ignore gender, Morgan (cited in Foster,1999:316) noted; ‘the first and most obvious source of power in an organisation is formal authority, a form of legitimised power that is respected and acknowledged by those with whom one interacts...’. Foster (1999) further argued that elementary legitimate authority is a mixture of one or more characteristics of rule of law, belief and appeal. In a patriarchal structure, official authority is largely in the hands of men and this source of authority is possibly problematic for women. Any investigation of the gender structures within large organisations reveals that segregation in the workplace are confined to lower hierarchical levels and female managers present a challenge to conventional practices rather than being able to draw on this foundation which underpins formal authority.

Organisations with comparatively fewer women in positions of power are experienced to be less tolerant of behaviours naturally associated with women and are less convivial (Simpson, 2000). The hierarchical position of the imbalance is important in shaping the experiences of women further down the hierarchy, even when imbalances at the various levels are reduced (Simpson, 2000). The belief that authority has to be earned is accompanied by additional demands which result from being a female in a male dominated environment. Some women in senior management positions negotiate their positions in isolation from other women and the experience can become personalised in ways which conceal its structural predominance and significance (Foster, 1999). Hargreaves (1994) indicated that there are very little incentives to transform the attitude of those in command, not to mention the structures of sport in order to accomplish a more democratic constitutional form of control.

Coakley (1998) provided a possible reason for the inequity in job position in that even if women do get coaching and administrative jobs, they are less likely than men to feel that the sport organisation in which they work are organized to be open and inclusive. This he says could have a negative impact on their job satisfaction.

According to Collins and Kay (2003), sport is a prime site for challenging gender ideology and it is therefore a particularly valuable area for encouraging involvement by the most disempowered women. Having shown that the inequalities of the gender

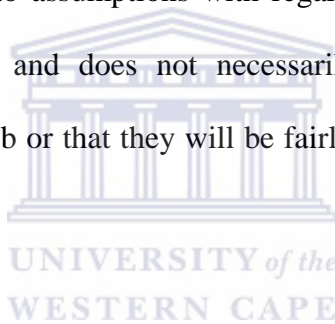
order are evident they argue that sport contributes to these unequal social relations, by elevating the male experience over females in a particular, powerful and visible way. Sport is therefore a site where social relations that underpin women's experiences of social exclusion are very persuasively reproduced.

This is a form of vertical segregation. Evetts (cited in Ellison, 2001) identified two forms of segregation affecting the workforce i.e. vertical and horizontal segregation. These are forms of gender biased activities. Vertical segregation is explained by Povall (cited in Ellison, 2001) as a high proportion of women located within an industry, but only a tiny minority reaching positions of genuine power, authority and status. Ellison's (2001) further argued that women are not being promoted to senior management positions because men precipitately see other men as more appropriate for those posts, leading to vertical segregation in an organisation. Vertical segregation refers to a tiny minority of women reaching positions of genuine power, authority and status within an organisation where there are a high proportion of women. Evetts (cited in Ellison, 2001) also found that whilst there was a very structured career pattern up to a certain level in the organisation she studied; promotion to management posts beyond that level was outside that structure and by invitation.

Horizontal segregation results in streaming women into the non-managerial less strategic decision making roles of an organisation and is a form of discreetly disguised career structure (Ellison 2001). Vertical and horizontal segregation is a gender bias in the form of organisational fit. This refers to the way women contribute

to an organisation especially one which is male dominated such as sport. It addresses women's ability to make decisions and take authority at work and whether or not women have to work harder to prove their capabilities in the male dominated environment of sport.

Claes (2002) alluded to the presumption that if women do not assume masculine traits in the workplace, then they would not be able to perform management activities in a manner which is deemed appropriate. Furthermore, these masculine traits according to Samson (1999), leads to assumptions with regard to racial and gender divisions within the labour sector and does not necessarily guarantee women the equal opportunity of getting a job or that they will be fairly remunerated compared to their male counterparts.



The above indicates that hierarchal structures maintain their status quo as a tiny minority of women are promoted into leadership positions as men see other men as more suitable for leadership positions.

2.2.4 Decision Making

In North America, there has been a significant decline in the number and proportion of women coaches and administrators in many sport departments, especially in the athletic departments of high schools and colleges (Coakley, 1998). In the United States in 1996, women's programs had more than 1003 head coaching jobs than they did in 1986. However, men occupied 670 of those jobs whilst women occupied 333.

In 1972, over 90% of women's athletic programs were headed by women, but in 1996, one in four had no female administrators and only 19% had female directors. Furthermore, women made up only 12% of full time sport directors at academic institutions, while men occupied the balance thereof (88%). According to Rotstein (2006) there are plenty of opportunities for women in the United States to coach women, but there are no opportunities for women to coach men. Rotstein (2006) also indicated that in 2005, The Indianapolis Star reported that 95 men were coaching women's Division 1 basketball teams, but not a single women coaching any of the 327 male teams, even as an assistant.



In South Africa the South African Sports Commission (2004) reported that some participants in the study indicated that gender equity should be forced upon men because women are not given real opportunities for decision making in leadership positions. In addition to this, women in sport are frustrated with the limited resources which they are able to access. In 1997 Hargreaves (1997) reported that in South Africa women got far fewer than men in terms of equipment, facilities, funding, coaching, sponsorship and media exposure. The South African Sports Commission (2004) seemed to find that although there is an overall awareness that more resources have been made accessible to the different sport and recreation sectors, the situation for women has not resulted in significantly more women in leadership positions. Yet, the appointment of women in leadership roles has made them role models to women at grass roots level. In addition, men in senior positions on a governmental level could advocate for gender equity as they are viewed as valuable mentors and they are

especially valued in structures that are awarded government funding (South African Sports Commission, 2004)

Theberge (1994) indicated three reasons why men resist women's entry into sport. Firstly, men have a desire to maintain sport as a socializing agent that prepares them for adult roles in the public sector, particularly in the workplace and political life; secondly, in order to maintain hierarchical rankings of sex roles and thirdly, to promote an exclusively male realm that allows for expressiveness and intimacy. Women perceive themselves as being in non-stop competition with men. Women disapprove of the intensity of chauvinism, antagonism and intimidation they experience from male members. They are perturbed by the insufficient resources offered as they get less than men in terms of equipment, facilities, funding, coaching, sponsorship, media exposure, access to shared facilities (Birrell & Cole, 1994)

Women feel that they lack autonomy and what they are looking for is to share equally in a democratic process at all levels of decision making (Hargreaves, 1997). The New South Wales Minister for Tourism and Sport and Recreation, Sandra Nori said that "despite the important roles women play in community sport, we still have too few women managers, administrators, coaches and officials in this state" She also stated that by having more women in decision making positions it will help make the sporting environment more appealing to women and girls (United Kingdom, 2006).

From the above, there is a strong indication that governments should advocate for gender equity as women feel that they lack autonomy to do so. Furthermore, women are not given real opportunities due to lack of funding and facilities in sport and feel that gender equity should be forced upon men. Even though there are opportunities for women to take up positions where they are able to make decisions, women are still subject to discrimination and are unable to fill those positions.

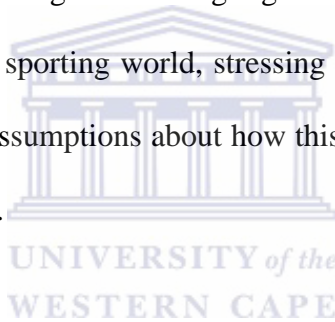
2.2.5 Tokenism

Token members of any organisation tend to be subject to greater performance pressure than members of dominant groups. According to Foster (1999) both token and non token women highlighted that with regard to organisational fit, women were subject to convoluted practices which are seen as part of the male culture.



A common perception is that men are viewed as leaders while women are believed to be accommodating supporters. Often working in male dominated organisations women are less likely to see themselves as leaders or to seek leadership positions (Jackson, 2001). The common perception is based on traditional beliefs that men are natural leaders. This leads to the assumption that women are not suitable candidates for leadership positions on the basis of their gender. Consequently, as also highlighted by Jackson (2001) this would lead to women not pursuing leadership positions because they too are of the assumption that males are more entitled to such positions. Hence, the advancement of women into top levels of management has been stunted due to gender bias in leadership positions (Hargreaves, 1994). The Federal

Glass Ceiling Commission (2002) suggested that the status of minorities and women managers were saturated in the public sector and other organisations, such as sporting organisations, but not where capital gain was an option. This means that businesses are attempting to fill (gender) equity posts to advance their corporate image and not to increase their annual turnover. This form of tokenism could potentially have negative repercussions as it lowers the self confidence of the token member. Theberge (1993) pointed out that female coaches in the world of sport, experience the marginalization common to token members of a workgroup. Their token status provides a context in which gender is highlighted through the number of men or women represented in the sporting world, stressing the physical differences between men and women and the assumptions about how this translates into the superiority of men's sporting experience.



The above indicates that women as token members are marginalized as they carry an added overload of visibility and are subject to performance pressure. Tokenism has negative repercussions on the advancement of women into leadership positions as they lack confidence in their abilities.

2.3 Gender bias from a sociological perspective: Critical theory

In the following section an explanation is offered for using the critical theory as the framework for discussing the findings of this study.

Morgan (1983) reported that sport is essentially an instrument of the social order. By this he meant that sport can be used as a vehicle to promote social change. In this view the central function of sport would be to promote economic and political interests of a particular country. Similarly, 10 years later sport sociologist Leonard II (1993) argued that many theoretical approaches to sport in society centre on different aspects of the nature of sport in society. Likewise, Coakley (1998) argued that each theoretical approach to sport has its different assumptions about the foundation of social order in a society. These views are supported by sport feminist Birrell (2000) who was of the opinion that our theoretical understandings of sport has become more sophisticated and that each interpretation of a subject reproduces a shift in our theoretical understanding of sport in society.

These claims about the relationship between sport and society will lead the researcher to ask different questions about sport as a social constituent in life. McDonald and Birrell (1999) suggested that the critical theory revolves around particular interactions of sexuality, race and gender. When focused on one axis, isolated from the others, it is inadequate as a complete framework of analysis. In light of this, the researcher could consequently arrive at different conclusions about the importance of sport in society.

According to sport sociologist Jennifer Hargreaves (1994), as sport developed and became progressively more organized, they often displayed gender logic which is consistent with dominant forms of gender ideology. This gender logic in sport tends to promote or reproduce gender ideology in the society as a whole, which was, and still is disadvantageous to women while it works to the advantage of men in economic, political, legal and educational spheres. Hargreaves (1994) referred to this as hegemonic masculinity which is a concept borrowed from Connell's (1987) analysis of gender as a power relationship.

Coakley (1998) highlighted that the critical theory focuses on power in social life. By this he suggested that sport comprises of different approaches intended to enhance our understanding of where power comes from, how it works in different situations and how power shifts. Similarly, McDonald and Birrell (1999) indicated that power operates differently in different places and times, and therefore we cannot assume which relation of power is always important everywhere.

According to Rigauer (2000), the critical theory can be described as an attempt to integrate Marxist and Freudian methodology. The first meaning of the term critical theory was defined by Max Horkheimer of the Frankfurt School of Social Science in 1937 (Rigauer, 2000). According to Wikipedia (2005), Birrell (2000), Coakley (1998) and Hargreaves (1994), the critical theory is aimed at critiquing and changing society as a whole. The core concepts of critical theory as defined by Horkheimer are 1)

critical theory should be directed at the entirety of society and 2) that critical theory should enhance our understanding of society by interpreting all major social sciences including sociology (Wikipedia, 2005).

According to Coakley (1998), the various categories which comprise critical theory encompass a number of different approaches to understanding social life. These are based on the following three ideas: 1) that conflict and agreement exists simultaneously in social life, 2) that shared values and agreement are never permanent because they combine to form an unending process of compromise, coercion and negotiation between various groups and 3) the basis for conflict changes position from one location to another based on the political, economic and historical circumstances of social life. In this way the critical theory emphasizes that most people in society who show a keen interest in sport, are aware of who controls sport in their societies and have learned not only to acknowledge those systems of domination, but to define them as correct. Furthermore, Coakley (1998) claimed that the critical theory can be used to discuss how social relations influence sports and sport forms and to recognize other sport forms that signify the interest of more people and allow previously underrepresented people access to sport in society.

In light of the above, Birrell and Richter's (1988), in their article "Is a Diamond Forever? Feminist Transformations in Sport", have used the critical theory to analyse how women's sport structures informed their experiences and their interpretation thereof in their lives. Although many sociological theories exist, none of them

explore gender bias in light of women's experiences in the way critical theory is able to do.

The conflict theory emphasises dominance of some social groups by others and uses power and conflict as analytic tools (Loy & Booth, 2000). Compared to conflict theorists, who, according to Leonard II (1993), view sport as a social establishment where those who assume positions of power, persuade, entice, control and dictate to workers. Leonard II (1993) further suggested that the conflict theory in sport is related to social divisions which materialize from differences between power, reputation and prosperity. Compare this to figurational sociology where the central dimension is that of dynamic interdependency of power. In this theory, power is not viewed as a substance or property possessed by particular individuals and groups but as characteristic of all human relationships (Dunning & Malcolm, 2003). Hargreaves (cited in Coakley & Dunning, 2000) is critical of figurational sociology because she is of the opinion that it neglects gender issues

As can be seen, none of these theories allow for the exploring of the lived experiences of sportsmen or women in the same way as critical theory.

Coakley (1998) and Leonard II (1993) point out that the main concerns of critical theorists is to ask questions about why women were not allowed to play certain sports in the past, how the gendered nature of sport is defined and organised, how sport is commented to the process of development and change. If these concerns are

addressed, the questions will focus on and provide answers to queries regarding the experiences of female sport administrators as it is designed to critically examine the way in which society operates.

Critical theory has been used by sport feminist researchers and sport sociologists researching women's experiences in sport, such as Birrell (2000), Hall (1996) and Henderson (1991). To claim that sport are gendered activities suggests that some masculine ideals and experiences are highly regarded and used as standards for evaluating the success of any sport organisation simply because they have been socially constructed out of values and experiences of men. Henderson (1991:43) also claimed that one of the key focus points of a researcher using the critical theory is to interact with those who are 'oppressed'. Similarly, Hall (1996) indicated that the critical theory sets out to transform structures that oppress women in sport and create liberating changes. According to Hargreaves and McDonald (2000) this means that one should focus on gender and its relationship to other structures of power. Their work has also drawn attention to the diversity of women and other subordinate groups. Birrell (2000:64) claimed that critical approaches are explicitly about power and how gender relations are 'reproduced' by, 'resisted' in, and 'transformed through' sport in various ways. She reports that there is a production of male power in sport and that there is a resistance of women to dominant sport practices. While Henderson (1991) is of the view that when using the critical theory, the researcher is compelled to take into account her/his own beliefs about society. In the case of this study that would be gender bias and sport.

Critical feminist theories have grown out of the dissatisfaction with dominant ideologies deeply rooted within many social systems. It is for this purpose that the researcher has chosen to use the critical theory in this study to examine and discuss the experiences of women who have been not been recognized and who have been subjugated by dominant cultural ideology.

In summary, women in sport in South Africa are subject to consistent traditions that fail to recognize the degree to which men's values and experiences have shaped the experiences of women in sport. Critical theories are designed to examine the way in which society operates. When applied to the domain of sport, the critical theory can offer different assumptions about how social relations influence sport in a society. It also identifies the way sport highlights the needs and interests of more people and allows previously underrepresented people (such as women) access to sport and the as it transforms or reproduces the way in which society operates and controls sport and sport forms. Critical theories can therefore identify and promote sport forms which are aligned with the values and experiences of women in society in a way which challenges and transforms existing forms of gender relations. This could contribute towards making sport more equitable in society.

2.4 Summary of Chapter Two

This chapter explored the experiences of females in management, administrative and leadership positions and highlighted their experiences with regard to gender bias in the workplace.

The discussion in this chapter showed how sport organisations could merely be accommodating women in the field of sport, but at the same time they are over-compensating for men, thereby disrupting the gender balance they are trying to create. The chapter also included a comment on several studies that have explored the experiences of women in sport. It was highlighted how these studies have been mostly quantitative, focusing on statistical variables. Mention was made that while these studies do a great deal to expand our understanding of the experiences of women in administrative positions both in the corporate industry as well as in sport they do limit our understanding as to what extent women experience discrimination.

In this chapter the gap exists in our understanding of the meaning of women's sporting experiences that can only be filled by allowing the participant to tell her own story

It is the purpose of this research study to attempt to bridge this gap by taking a qualitative approach to the exploring the meaning of lived experiences of female administrators in the field of sport in the Western Cape.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter begins with an outline of the research approach adopted in this study. This is followed by an explanation of the methods of data collection which includes the selection of participants, description of the research setting, and an overview of the data collection setting which includes, procedures adopted. Thereafter, outlined are considerations around trustworthiness and reflexivity and a description of the data analysis is offered. Ethical considerations are also mentioned.

3.2 Research Approach

The focus of this study was on female sport administrators and their experiences with regard to gender bias in their places of work. In this study a qualitative approach was adopted. According to Borg and Gall (cited in Creswell, 2003), the intent of qualitative research is to understand particular social situations, events, roles and group interaction. Further to this, Creswell (2003) suggests that qualitative research enables the researcher to develop a level of detail about the individual or place.

Denzin and Lincoln (2003) claimed that a qualitative approach allows a researcher to generate information with regard to perceptions and understandings that individuals have about their own experiences of a particular phenomenon within any given context. In this instance, the phenomenon is gender bias as experienced by female sport administrators, and the context is in their workplace.

A qualitative approach is therefore considered the most appropriate for this study. It allowed for the exploration of women's understanding of their experiences of gender bias to be explored. In addition, it provided the space for female sport administrators to explain their experiences of gender bias in their own words.

3.3 Methods and Process of Data Collection

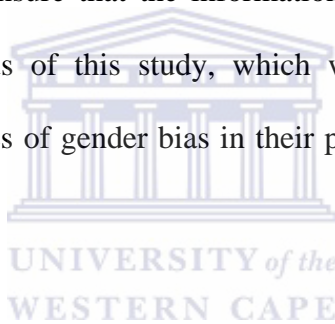
3.3.1 Individual Interviews

According to Flick (2002) qualitative data-collection methods, like interviews, are useful because they allow the participants' (in this case women) own voices, interpretations, experiences, opinions and perceptions of gender bias to construct their experiences. Qualitative research methods look to ascertain the underlying fundamental nature of the experiences of the participants and ultimately to inform the conclusions of any research (Creswell, 2003).

The individual interview is an example of a qualitative method of data collection. In this study a semi-structured face-to-face interview method was adopted as this has been identified as one of the best methods of data-collection to develop a good relationship between the researcher and the participant (Anderson & Arsenault, 1998). According to Flick (2002) qualitative data-collection methods, like interviews, are useful because they allow the participants to express themselves in their words, to have their voices heard and to offer personal views on interpretations, experiences,

opinions and, for this study, experiences of gender bias, and ultimately to inform the conclusions of this research.

May (2002) is of the opinion that a semi-structured data-collection interview schedule will ensure a balance between the participants discussion of their own experiences and keeping the interview focused on the aims of this study. The core questions used in each semi-structured interview in this study can be found in Appendix B. These questions served as a guideline and were not created to encourage pre-determined responses, but rather to ensure that the information obtained from each participant was relevant to the focus of this study, which was to investigate female sport administrators' experiences of gender bias in their places of work. (See Appendix B for list of questions).



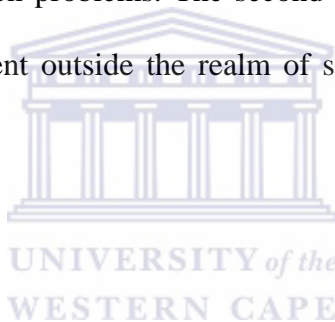
The participants were briefed about the study. They were informed of the aims and objectives of the study and what procedures would be followed. They were also informed that their participation would be completely voluntary. They were then invited to sign a consent form. All the interviews were tape-recorded with the permission from the participant and then transcribed into English. Two interviews were conducted with each participant, lasting between 60-90 minutes long each (See Appendix A for a copy of the consent form).

3.3.2 Selection and Description of Participants

There are a limited number of women in leadership positions in sport in the Western Cape who are remunerated for their employment. Only eight women hold senior management positions. It is for this reason that purposive sampling was employed in this study in order to meet the selection criterion of the researcher (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delpont, 2005). In addition the researcher was advised by the Higher Degrees Committee of the University of the Western Cape to select only five participants. To this end, five women of the possible eight women were invited to participate in this study. Candidates were purposefully selected from an updated provincial sport federation database which was obtained from the Western Cape Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport. These candidates hold positions in sport organisations ranging from Presidents, Vice Presidents and administrators. They have held these offices for no less than one year. The researcher was advised by the Higher Degrees Committee of the University of the Western Cape to select a sample which reflects the historical and cultural diversity of the women in this province which would add to the complexity of gender equity in the workplace. To this end, one white, two coloured, one black (who withdrew) and one Muslim woman participated in the study³. All the participants were from the Western Cape.

³ The terms 'white', 'coloured' and 'black' are descriptive words used to identify persons of a particular race or cultural decent. These terms were used by the South African apartheid government to identify and separate people from various racial descents. Today's democratic government uses still use these terms for affirmative action purposes in order to track integration of the various racial descents into society to establish whether affirmative action policies have been properly implemented. In this study, these terms has been used for convenience and not in a derogatory manner.

Alice⁴ is a white female in a presidential capacity in a predominantly female sport code. Dolly is a coloured female from a mixed-gendered sport code. She is in the capacity of a Secretary-General on a national level and a Vice president on a provincial level. Noeleen is also a coloured female from a mixed gendered sport code in the capacity of a provincial sport administrator and Aeysha is a Muslim (by marriage) female in a directorship position at a Cape Town university. Eventually only these four women participated. The fifth interview could not be conducted. The first black female sport administrator was unable to undertake the interview due to logistical and transportation problems. The second black female sport administrator found alternate employment outside the realm of sport and was not able to do the interview.



3.3.3 Research Setting

According to Patton (1990) qualitative researchers use a naturalistic approach to inductively and holistically understand human experiences in terms of context-specific settings. Guba and Lincoln (1994) are of the view that the researcher is able to learn more through a naturalistic method of data collection. In this study the setting being researched is the sport organisations in which the participants hold leadership positions as female sport administrators.

According to Creswell (1998) a data collection setting should be both convenient for the participants and guarantee them privacy and confidentiality. In this study, the

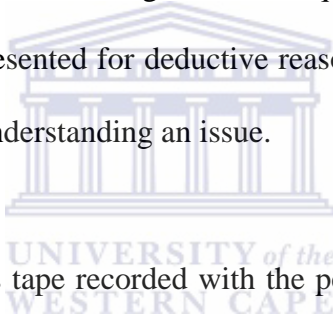
⁴ For the purposes of this study, pseudonyms were used to preserve the anonymity of the participants.

most ‘appropriate’ and ‘natural’ setting for collecting data was in the offices at the sport organisations of three of the participants. In the case of Dolly, the data collection setting was in the office of the law firm which she is employed because she does not have a designated office space in the sport organisation where she volunteers her services. The offices of the participants, in addition, also guaranteed the necessary privacy and confidentiality

For the purposes of this study ‘the workplace’ needed to be clearly defined as some of the participants are not remunerated for the work they do. Only two of the participants are actually remunerated for the work they do as sport administrators, i.e. Aeysha and Noeleen. In addition, Aeysha also operates in sites other than the university where she is permanently employed. For example, she attends government sanctioned sport meetings. Noeleen is a paid employee of the sport organisation in which she works. In contrast to this, Alice is a volunteer sport administrator and does not have alternative employment. In her instance, her workplace refers to the sport organisation where she holds a presidential capacity in her organisation. Finally, Dolly is employed as a manager in a law firm. In addition, she holds various management positions in the sport organisation where she works as a volunteer. For the purposes of this study the workplace for Dolly refers to the sport organisation for which she performs these duties.

3.4 Data Analysis

Mahrer, Spradley, Taylor and Borgan (cited in Aronson, 1994) reported that once all the data is collected, there are many ways in which researchers may analyze their participants' responses. According to them thematic analysis is one such way. In this study thematic analysis was used to analyze the data collected. According to Donovan-Hall (2004), the advantages of thematic analysis are that: (a) it provides meaningful organisation and structure to data collected; (b) it provides rich, insightful and complex meaning; c) it uses a theory driven approach; and d) it can be used as the basis for theory generation. This being said, since qualitative research is inductive in nature, theories are not presented for deductive reasoning but rather to indicate other explanations offered for understanding an issue.



In this study, the data was tape recorded with the permission of the participants and each interview was then transcribed into English and then examined by the researcher in an attempt to identify pre-determined themes. Transcripts were thoroughly read several times by the researcher. Transcripts were coded and analyzed both during and after the data collection period. After the first round of interviews, data was coded and analyzed, then the same process was followed after the second round of interviews. According to Donovan-Hall (2004), the importance of a good coding manual is that a) it serves as a paper trail to verify analysis; b) it makes associations between code and data clear to the reader; and c) it clearly demonstrates the process involved in the analysis. After both rounds of interviews were complete, all the interviews were collated.

The text in this study was coded by placing words or phrases, which related to a specific idea or question. Similar or related ideas were grouped together in thematic categories. The thematic categories were then synthesized into a narrative summary. This narrative summary is aimed at reflecting the experiences of the participants. The researcher then later used these categories to identify any relationship between the data collected and then refer back to literature in order to build a valid argument. The analysis revealed that there were too many variations and complexities around each participant's experiences of gender bias for the data to be neatly categorised. Therefore, the researcher categorised them in themes and sub themes as previously mentioned. Each transcribed interview was returned to the relevant participant to be read for accuracy and to offer an opportunity to confirm the information, to retract all or part of her transcript or to add more information

3.5 Trustworthiness

According to Patton (2002) the purpose of qualitative research is to express and explain a collection of distinctive personal experiences, unlike quantitative research. Consequently, the concept of reliability has to be understood differently in qualitative research. Krefting (cited in Cromie, Robertson & O'Best, 2003), proposed that an alternative way to judge reliability and validity in qualitative research is to use the terms of credibility and trustworthiness. She suggests various strategies for achieving trustworthiness including triangulation, member checking and peer examination. Similarly, Creswell (2003) offered a variety of procedures for data verification. He

recommends that qualitative researchers adopt at least two of the eight procedures he offers. The eight procedures are as follows: prolonged engagement and persistent observation, triangulation, rich thick description, external audits, negative case analysis, member checks, clarify researcher bias and peer review or debriefing. The last three have been adopted in this study to verify and give value to the data. More specifically;

- Member checks: All the transcribed data was given back to the participants so that they could comment on accuracy of recording.
- Clarification of researcher bias: This ensures as the researcher, I, acknowledge my own past experiences, biases, interpretations and dilemmas as these could shape the findings of this study. To this end a reflective attitude was adopted by the researcher. (Refer to 3.6 for an overview on reflexivity)
- Peer review or debriefing: My colleague and supervisor as well as my co-supervisor provided me with the opportunity to debrief, to organise and to gain perspective and clarity on any assumptions, expectations, biasness and dilemmas which I might have about the participants' responses. Peer review and debriefing was another strategy adopted for data verification in this study. The researcher used this as an opportunity to express my ideas and feelings which attributed to my own experiences of gender bias. My reviewers, who were also my supervisor and co-supervisor kept me focused on the objectives of this study. This added to the reliability and trustworthiness of this study. The review sessions were tape recorded and transcribed.

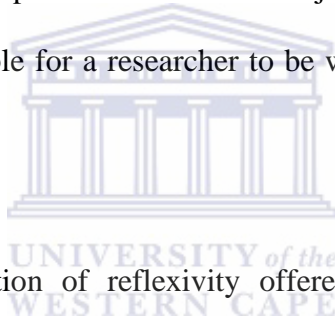
According to Patton (1990) credibility of research findings depends less on sample size than on the richness of the information gathered. More than that, it is about asking hard questions ‘about methods, meanings and interpretations’ (Creswell, 1998:202). This is what as the researcher, I have tried to accomplish in my reporting on the findings in this study.

3.6 Reflexivity

According to Patton (2002), reporting in the active voice (the ‘I’) makes visible the researcher’s awareness of the role s/he plays in the collection of data and the interpretation thereof. It also provides an opportunity for the researcher to acknowledge her/his own thoughts, interpretations and assumptions regarding the topic under discussion. Further to this, Patton (2002:65) said that ‘A credible, authoritative, authentic, and trustworthy voice engages the reader through a rich description...so that the reader joins the inquirer in the search for meaning’. This means that the researcher provides a context and possible ways of interpreting and giving meaning to the participants’ responses and experiences. In this way the researcher is not claiming to know, but is offering different perspectives as a result of her/his own experiences, interpretations and assumptions on the issues under discussion. It is important that the researcher clearly states to the reader the conflicts s/he is experiencing and substantiates meanings given to the data. This was useful in this study as it allowed me, as the researcher not only to practice self awareness, but

also to remain as objective as possible throughout the reporting of the findings in this study.

In a qualitative study of this nature, self reflexivity plays a crucial role in contributing to the validity of the findings. There are however, apparent contrasting views in the literature with regard to what self reflexivity entails. For example, according to Edwards (cited in Angevine, 2006) the researcher should be objective, separate, without identity or personal bias. This is not a useful interpretation for me as the researcher because while, open-mindedness and objectivity are desirable goals of any researcher, it is not possible for a researcher to be without an identity or completely unbiased or impartial.



The following interpretation of reflexivity offered by Nightingale and Cromby (1999:228) is more appropriate and attainable as a desirable goal for me as the researcher. According to them;

Reflexivity requires an awareness of the researcher's contribution to the construction of meanings throughout the research process, and an acknowledgment of the impossibility of remaining 'outside of' one's subject matter while conducting research. Reflexivity then, urges us to explore the ways in which a researcher's involvement with a particular study influences, acts upon and informs such research.

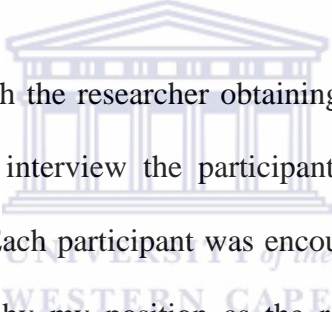
Consistent with Nightingale and Cromby (1999), Willig (2001) described reflexivity as a method which involves thoughts and the way in which our research affects and possibly changes us.

In this study as the researcher, I have tried to remain objective as possible. I was aware that being subjective would essentially influence the findings of the study. I was also aware that I had facilitated and was in control of the interview session because I had guided each in line with the focus of this study. I have therefore practiced personal reflexivity. I have used this method to reflect upon my own experiences, interests and beliefs about gender bias in the workplace and how these could shape this study. For example, as a young coloured female in her 20's my beliefs and interests in gender bias are borne out of personal experiences in my own life, as well as through observation of other individuals either within my immediate circle of friends and family, or people I have met. Consequently, personal reflexivity was important for me as researcher, not only in acknowledging the participants' experiences of gender bias, but also in reflecting on my own possible biasness in this regard and my lack of awareness of how the participants' experiences were affected and shaped by the old system of legislated racial segregation.

In addition, epistemological reflexivity was also observed in this study as I could reflect on my assumptions of gender bias. Willig (2001) claimed that the importance of the assumptions we make in our research assists us in thinking about the implications such assumptions could have on the research findings. This was a very

important aspect part of the research process because any personal bias I might have had would have influenced the finding of the study. It was not until the end of the first round of interviews that I began to epistemologically reflect on my assumptions and ignorance towards gender bias. It was important for me to reflect in this manner as it allowed me to construct an awareness regarding my involvement in the research project.

The following discussion is a reflection on my experiences as a researcher of each of the participants' contributions to the study:



Each interview started with the researcher obtaining demographic information from each participant. In each interview the participants were assured and guaranteed confidentiality and trust. Each participant was encouraged to share their experiences without being influenced by my position as the researcher. In this regard it was impressed upon each participant that she was the expert in this study because it was information about her experiences of gender bias that was being sought. Each participant in this study has been involved in sport administration in the Western Cape for over a decade and is experienced in the positions they hold. This was very useful as each had a wealth of knowledge and experiences from which to talk.

The first person interviewed was a coloured female named Noeleen, who is an administrator in a mixed-gendered sport code. The interview with Noeleen went according to plan considering it was the first interview of the research project. There

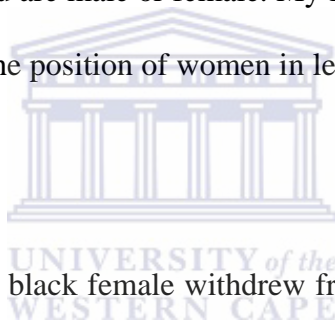
were a few disturbances as we conducted the interview in her office and the telephone kept interrupting the interview. I observed that she was a very forthright individual who in the interview was not afraid to share her stance on any issue.

The second person interviewed was a white female named Alice, a long-standing member and president of a predominantly female sport code. Alice had difficulty in talking about herself. She was however willing to focus on her observations of the experiences of all women in her organisation. I found this extremely challenging as she never revealed much about herself and was not very forthcoming with information about her own experiences but rather those of her colleagues. There were contradictions in her responses. This was the most difficult interview to conduct in this study. I did not react to this immediately by probing or challenging her because I wanted her to feel comfortable with talking to me. I did not want to force her to respond, but do so at her own discretion. I found what worked well was to slow down the interview to allow her to time to reflect before speaking. Another strategy that worked well was to encourage the participant, to speak about her career and her achievements in her sport code and before guiding the session back to the interview schedule. I observed that this method made her feel more relaxed and at ease.

The third person interviewed was a coloured female named Dolly, who serves as a secretary-general on a national level and a vice president on a provincial level in a mixed-gendered sport. This individual was a pleasure to interview as she thought

through each question before answering. It was clear during the interview that she advocated for sportswomen's rights and that she felt strongly that the strengths of women are not being acknowledged.

The fourth person interviewed was Aeysha, a Muslim female in a directorship position at tertiary education level. She is responsible for many sport codes. This was in my opinion by far the most rewarding interview as the participant has so much energy and passion for the work she does. She believes that the work must get done irrespective of whether you are male or female. My interview with her offered me the most useful insights into the position of women in leadership positions than any other interview.



The fifth person, a young, black female withdrew from the study due to the fact that she relocated to alternate employment outside the realm of sport. I could not conduct an alternate interview with another black woman because of logistical problems. Unfortunately, there were no other black females in the database who met the criteria for participation in this study. This situation is a reflection of the limited number of black females in sport leadership positions in the Western Cape.

Throughout all of the interviews with the participants in this study, as the researcher, I made every effort to establish rapport with the participants and having enough detachment to generate trustworthy and reliable information. Any limitations regarding the ability to extract more useful information from the participants is due

more to lack of skills as an interviewer, on the part of myself as the researcher than the total absence of probing. Each core question was accompanied by additional questions inviting more input from the participants, such as “In what way?”; “How did it make you feel” and “Can you offer an example?” It is acknowledged, however, that a list of probing questions under each of the core questions could have enabled me as the researcher, to probe more confidently.

3.6.1 Reflexive Summary

In the case of the participants’, although their views are acknowledged by their male counterparts (some of the time), there seems to be times when their views are also sidelined. However, as experienced and competent administrators, the participants have learned to overcome such obstacles to help them manage this problem. There were instances when my views as a sportswoman were sidelined by males without, in my view, any justification. My way of dealing with this was to seek reasons from them as to why my ideas had not been considered.

The way in which these participants dealt with harassment and intimidation in the workplace should be commended. They have learnt to openly challenge and address any attempts of harassment and intimidation by their male co-workers. Upon reflecting on my own experiences of intimidation, I have realised that as a young researcher, I still have to learn more life skills in order to address acts of harassment and intimidation aimed at me. It is heart-warming to discover, that even though they lived in an era when a combination of racism and sexism often precluded them from

entry into sport, these participants hold their own against any acts of harassment and intimidation in their places of work. Through all this, they are now able to vigorously deal with issues of harassment because they have empowered themselves with the life skills I still have to learn.

When conducting research, one is always at risk of being influenced by prior knowledge and theoretical assumptions rather than the experiences of the participants. In this study, every effort has been made not to be influenced by the aforementioned.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

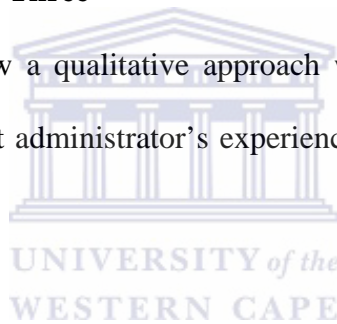
With respect to ethical considerations, permission to conduct this research was obtained from the Department of Sport, Recreation and Exercise Science and the Senate Higher Degrees Committee at the University of the Western Cape. Once identified, the participants were invited to be part of the study. They were briefed on the aims and objectives of the study, the reason why they were selected, the importance of their participation and how valuable their input would be. It was explained to them that their participation in the project was on a voluntary basis and that they could withdraw at any time. When they agreed to participate, they were invited to sign a consent letter (Appendix B), which was issued to them before the interviews were conducted.

With the permission of the participants, interviews were audio-taped. All information was treated with the strictest confidentiality and the identity of participants was

protected in so far as their names or personal information were not included in the reporting of the findings. Pseudonyms have therefore been used. Participants were given access to their transcribed information at their request and were allowed to amend or retract their transcripts, as well as offer additional information. For ethical reasons, the names of the participants were not recorded on both the audio-tapes, nor in the research project. A journal was kept to track and store interviews. This journal is only available to the researcher.

3.8 Summary of Chapter Three

This chapter outlined how a qualitative approach was appropriate to this study in capturing the female sport administrator's experiences with regard to gender bias in their places of work.



In this chapter the research setting was described as was the method of data collection. The method of analysis and data verification was outline. It was explained how the data was analysed using thematic analysis and transcripts were read and placed into narrative themes, after which quotations were grouped and placed into pre-determined themes which related to gender bias. The chapter also covered aspects of trustworthiness, reflexivity and ethical considerations.

The next chapter presents the results and findings which are presented in a qualitative thematic form. The discussion of the results is guided by the objective of the study which was to investigate the female sport administrators' experiences of gender bias

in the workplace. The discussion will be based on the participants' experiences and interpretations of gender bias with regard to differential treatment and organisational fit. The emerging theme of harassment and intimidation will also be discussed. In addition a reflection of the selected assumptions of the critical theory in relation to the findings of the female participants' experience of gender bias in the workplace will be offered.



CHAPTER 4: DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore female sport administrators' experiences of gender bias in their places of work. Data were collected by means of face-to-face interviews. The questions in the interviews were guided by the following two themes as revealed by the literature review on the topic of gender bias. Firstly, differential treatment and, secondly, organisational fit. In addition to these themes, there was one emerging theme, namely harassment and intimidation. This theme emerged out of questions posed by the researcher with regard to taking authority at work and was further explored in the subsequent interviews. The questions focused on whether the participants perceived that they are treated differently to their male colleagues in the workplace, whether they have ascribed to gender roles, whether they felt that they are taken seriously in the workplace, whether they felt they needed to work harder to prove themselves and whether they have experienced any form of harassment and intimidation. Refer to Appendix B for the core questions asked during the semi-structured interviews. The participants drew from their own experiences in their places of work within certain sport organisations in the Western Cape.

This chapter presents the findings of the thematic content analysis. The discussion starts by introducing the participants and is then followed by reporting the findings in the following way;


Firstly, the theme is introduced. Then a brief summary of the responses relevant to that theme is offered. Thirdly, the responses of each participant for that theme are

elaborated upon, and finally, literature is compared to the findings related to theme. This pattern is repeated for each of the themes in turn. Where pertinent, the researcher has offered insights based on her self reflexivity.

Pseudonyms are used to protect the identity of the research participants. In order to differentiate between the literatures quotations within the literature section, the participants' quotes will be presented in italics.

Also reported in this chapter is a summarized comparison of, and reflection on, selected assumptions of crucial theory in relation to the findings of this study.

4.2 Profile of participants



Name	Age	Designation	Work place	Number of years employed
Dolly	56	Vice Chairperson (Provincial) and Secretary-General (National)	Mixed Gendered Provincial Sports Code	10
Noeleen	58	Western Province Administrator	Mixed Gendered Provincial and National Sports Code	8
Aeysha	39	Director	Student Sports Code	5
Alice	71	President	Predominately Female Sports Code	49

Table 4.1 Profile of Respondents

The first theme for explorations and analysis was differential treatment

4.3 Differential Treatment

Differential treatment which is one of the themes of this study is described by Weiler (2004) as a form of discrimination on the basis of race, religion, age, origin, disability and gender.

For the purposes of this study, this theme was used to explore the participants' experiences and interpretations of being subjected to differential treatment in their workplaces. More specifically, this section refers to practices of differential treatment in organisations on the basis of gender which include differences in the acknowledgment of the females' views, comments and suggestions compared to their male counterparts. Furthermore, differential treatment on the basis of gender refers to whether female sport administrators are taken as seriously as their male counterparts with regard to the way their contributions to the organisation are valued. The experiences of the participants in this study with regard to differential treatment will be discussed under the following two headings; (1) practices of differential treatment and (2) gender-role stereotyping as components of gender bias.

4.3.1 Practices of differential treatment

Responses of the participants are discussed under the following headings; (1) participants' overall experiences of differential treatment and (2) participants' interpretation of their experiences in acknowledgment of female sport administrators' contributions.

4.3.1.1 Participants' overall experiences of differential treatment

From her experience, Dolly reported that she does not allow differential treatment to impact negatively on her work. Noeleen on the other hand believed that her strength of character did not entice differential treatment. Both Dolly and Noeleen acknowledge that differential treatment exists in their organisations, but contrary to Dolly, Noeleen openly challenged experiences of differential treatment. In comparison with Noeleen's and Dolly's views, Aeysha conveyed that she is constantly struggling against stereotypes such as being seen as a mother and not as a leader. Finally, Alice claimed that she is not subjected to differential treatment, however, she did not claim that there is an absence of differential treatment in her place of work. As can be seen from the above, the participants' interpretations of differential treatment were not all the same. However, they all came to the conclusion that differential treatment does exist in their places of work

The following discussion elaborates on the participants' experiences of differential treatment as introduced above and substantiates the conclusions.

Dolly is a coloured female and serves as a Secretary General at national level and a Vice President on a provincial level for a mixed-gendered sport code. Her responses suggest that she is not denying that differential treatment exists in her workplace, or that she experiences it first hand, but rather that an individual can decide how to manage the situation. Dolly said '*you do not allow it (differential treatment) to get to you*'. However, it appears from Dolly's response that she is not challenging the

system in a way that addresses the incidence of differential treatment against her in the workplace. The way she chooses to deal with differential treatment can be seen as her taking responsibility for the way in which she responds to such treatment. Yet, this does little to create awareness with regards to the existence of differential treatment in her workplace. In addition, this does not necessarily mean that all women have the ability, like Dolly, to deal with differential treatment in the way Dolly has done. Dolly's claim is that differential treatment does exist in her workplace but that according to her, it is merely a matter of not allowing oneself to be affected by it.

This begs the question: In what way would Dolly's ability to rise through the ranks of leadership to the current position of leadership have been influenced if she had actually challenged the status quo in her workplace with regard to being differentially treated on the basis of her gender instead of focussing on not letting it affect her?

Unlike Dolly, Aeysha was of the opinion that her male counterparts are actually pretending to acknowledge what she has to offer. She feels that they do not see her as a woman and as a leader, but as a mother. For instance she says '*they have this approach towards you instead of looking at you as a leader or as a female manager, it's almost this motherly approach*'. Aeysha is a Muslim woman by marriage. She holds a sport directorship position at a tertiary institution in the Cape. Aeysha also experiences that her male counterparts' pretence is extended not only to them '*putting up an act*' and that they do not actually listen to her, she feels they are just pretending to listen. This behaviour from the males at meetings indicates that they are actually

trying to treat her differently because they see her as being different. For example, she says; *'it's that, they go out of their way to make you feel at home in the meeting it's different to... (other) kinds of meetings'*. According to Aeysha, when the men say *'ok, this one is speaking and we listen'* then they are treating her differently because she feels that they do not do the same for the males on the committee. Aeysha's reaction to this and her criticism of her male counterparts in this regard, is possibly a projection of her own insecurities. It is possible that, as a woman, Aeysha, expects to be treated less than equal. This is only one possible explanation and was not explored further in this study.

While both Aeysha and Dolly reported being treated differently and indicated that they experienced being treated less than equal because they are women, Alice claimed that this is not the case for her. Alice is a white female who holds a Presidential position in a female dominated sport. According to Alice, she herself does not experience differential treatment in the workplace. She attributes this to the fact that the sport code of which she is president is a female dominated code and has historically always been managed by women. For instance, Alice says; *'...I think that we (women) are treated fairly well'*. However, she felt that female sport codes are subjected to differential treatment on the basis that male sport receives more funding than female sport. Alice claims that: *'male sports probably get more money'*.

It is important to note that Alice did not claim there is an absence of differential treatment in her place of work. Her claim is that she herself has not been subjected to

such treatment. In fact, her view is that they *'are treated fairly well'*. This is a situation which could have been explored further. For example: *What does she mean by 'treated fairly well'?*

While Alice holds the top administrative position in her sport code, Noeleen had to relinquish such a prestigious position in her sport code at the death of her husband. On his death Noeleen had to seek paid employment to support her family. Consequently, she now occupies an administrative position with less decision making power. However, because of her years of her previous experience in a directorship post, her views are respected and valued by both her female and male colleagues. Like Alice, Noeleen claims that she does not personally experience differential treatment. Noeleen attributes this to her own strength of character. She claimed, *'this is because of the strong character I have'*. She feels that she has *'nothing to lose'*, meaning that she has held the top position from which she resigned. She was not voted out of the position. Noeleen also did not make any claims that other women in her sport organisation are subject to differential treatment (or not). Like Dolly she also claimed that she does *'not allow it'*.

This is an example of an opportunity missed. As the researcher I could have explored this further and asked Noeleen specifically the reasons for challenging incidents of differential treatment of other women in her organisation even though she had not experienced it. It is possible that some women might risk the chance of promotion if

they do not ignore differential treatment. The implication is that it is up to the individual and how they choose to respond to it.

According to Acosta and Carpenter (1994), women in sport are subjected to differential treatment in the workplace. What is not clear from the findings of this study, in comparison with the literature, is (a) whether other women in the workplace of these participants experience differential treatment and (b) whether the participants manage differential treatment with the same confidence as their male counterparts if they were to experience differential treatment.

Although the participants are subject to differential treatment, there is an indication that even though they do experience differential treatment, they do not allow it to impact on their ability to do their work due to their objectivity. Hau Siu Chow and Crawford (2004) indicated that the hierarchical structure of most organisations prefer to maintain the status quo. Contrary to this research, it is evident that in light of comments made by Dolly that she is making it difficult for the organisations in which she works to maintain the status quo i.e. excludes women. Furthermore, Aeysha's experience of being seen as a mother as opposed to a sport leader is supported by Eitzen and Sage (1997). They indicated that the primary gender role directives of women are to be seen as child bearers, home-makers and sex objects. In addition, the gender roles ascribed to women classify them as inferior to and reliant on men. Porat (cited in Growe & Montgomery, 2000) suggested that women in leadership positions are inclined to facilitate leadership by enabling others to make contributions through

delegation and encouragement. Finally, in a study conducted in South Africa by Hargreaves (1997) she indicated that many women's sport was under-resourced compared to male sport. Alice's comments revealed that today not much has changed in this regard.

Further practices of differential treatment are reflected in the way in which participants' views, comments and suggestions in this study are acknowledged by their colleagues. This is discussed in the next section.

4.3.1.2 Participants' interpretation of their experiences in acknowledgement of female sport administrator's contributions

In this section, the manner in which the participants' views, comments and suggestions were acknowledged by their male counterparts is explored. The format of this discussion will be the same as the previous section.

From the participants' responses with regard to the acknowledgment of their views, the following key points were raised by them. Dolly conveyed that her views were only acknowledged when her opinions were similar to, or mirrored the rest of the people in the organisation. Aeysha's experiences were that she has to be prepared and do more work in order to have her views and comments acknowledged. Alice was of the opinion that because all her colleagues follow the constitution of their organisation, everyone was encouraged and felt at ease in giving their opinions. Unlike both Aeysha and Dolly, Noeleen believed that her views, comments and

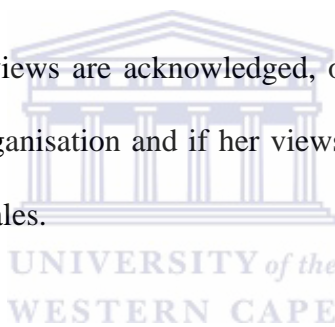
suggestions were only acknowledged because she made her voice heard by being assertive.

The following discussion elaborates on the participants' experiences of differential treatment as introduced above and specifically focuses on the acknowledgement of their contributions.

When Dolly says: *'Of course, not because most of our issues have been dealt with in a sense [but], if you're not supporting my suggestion you are against me personally'* she gives the impression that her views are acknowledged. However, she makes it clear that this is conditional on the views being aligned to dominant views of the sport organisation. She does not challenge their views at all. This could have been explored further in the interviews as it raises the question as to who set the ground rules within the organisation in the first place. Furthermore, statements made by Dolly suggest that males communicate in a way which is only understood by males and this ultimately excludes her. For instance, she says: *'I think when we speak the same language it is applauded and accepted but if we don't speak the same languages it is given a total miss over as if you are not even there'*. When Dolly refers to the same language, she does not mean English or Afrikaans, she means that there is a way that men communicate which she feels is different to the way women communicate, either by body behaviour, tone of voice or choice of words. By applauded and accepted it means that what she says is acknowledged and given value because it did not contradict or threaten the views of the males, and is consistent with

their (males) views. When she says '*given a total miss over*' she means that what she has said is ignored or rejected and not taken seriously. Finally, when she says '*as if you are not even there*' she is possibly suggesting that she is rendered invisible by the males in her organisation and that what she has said is not viewed (by the males) as being worthy of acknowledgment and not taken seriously. If Dolly's response is considered in this light, then what she is saying is that unless she uses the men's way of communicating, nothing she says will be acknowledged and valued by the men in her workplace. In addition she feels that she, in her role as a sport leader is not taken seriously.

Dolly indicated that her views are acknowledged, only if they are aligned with the dominant views of the organisation and if her views are communicated in a manner which is understood by males.



There is no way of knowing precisely from the responses the cause of the miscommunication. What is clear is that Dolly claimed that she cannot make herself understood and she felt de-valued and not acknowledged by the males in the sport organisation. When asked how often her views, comments or suggestions were acknowledged she said: '*From a one to ten scale? Three*'. Tainio (cited in Ember & Ember, 2004) claims that gender disparity in communication styles is due to differences in social status rather than gender. Contrary to this Lips (cited in Ember & Ember, 2004) maintains that men talk more than women and maintain the power differences between the sexes by interrupting women and by not listening or responding to them. According to Hau Siu Chow and Crawford (2004), some women

choose to remain unspoken in meetings if they feel that their point of view does not correspond with the men's the organisation and/or if their views were not accepted.

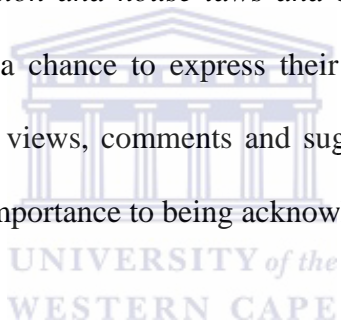
Unlike Dolly, Noeleen claims that she has little difficulty in getting her views across or of making sure her opinions are acknowledged. From the data there are two possible reasons for this: (1) Noeleen has many years' experience as a committee member and previously occupied a directorship position. It is possible to therefore assume she knows how to present herself and her views and (2) she is persistent and determined that her opinion will be acknowledged. She reports: '*Yes, I can say I force myself*'. Where she feels necessary, Noeleen has to assert herself, even though she is a knowledgeable and competent administrator.

When Aeysha claimed that administrators, including herself, may '*go the extra mile*' in preparing for meetings, she is resentful that despite making the extra effort, there is no guarantee that her views, comments and suggestions will be acknowledged. She previously alluded to the fact that men do not take her seriously because their image of her as a top sport administrator is overshadowed by the apparent image they have of her as a mother because she is a woman.

Thus far, the responses with regard to the way female sport administrators are acknowledged have shown that; (1) Dolly's views are acknowledged if they are aligned with the males in the workplace; (2) Noeleen is outspoken and assertive and feels she can confidently ensure that her views are heard and acknowledged; and (3)

Aeysha feels that even when she puts in double effort, she is not sure her views and suggestions will be acknowledged.

In considering Alice's experiences in this regard, she suggested that she works in an organisation in which policy and procedure are strictly followed and that all comments and suggestions go through the correct channels and that protocol is observed at all times as committee members follow their organisation's constitution. She said; *'Once again we haven't got a lot of differences because we are working according to our constitution and house laws and byelaws etc'*. This, she believed guaranteed everyone has a chance to express their views. However, this does not necessarily mean that her views, comments and suggestions are acknowledged. All the participants attached importance to being acknowledged.



Dolly and Alice seemed content with some of the arrangements within their sport organisations as it ensures that everyone has an opportunity to be heard. Noeleen appeared to depend on her own experiences and confidence to ensure that her views are heard. Aeysha seemed to place her efforts in her determination not to be found ill-prepared at any meeting.

It is not clear from the responses whether *'by heard'* means equally acknowledged and valued. This was not explored in any of the interviews. Further studies on this could shed light on the issue especially with regard to the way in which expressing one's views translates into that view being acknowledged and valued. Noeleen was of

the opinion that other women are '*not confident enough*'. She believed that women have become too reliant on the males to run an organisation and as a result, when the women offer their comments or suggestions in meetings, these are ignored. She also said that women's comments are '*shut down*' and as a result of this they have lost confidence in themselves.

These findings are similar to Ragins (cited in Jackson, 2001) who reported that women, who move into higher positions in organisations, become more visible and unrestricted. However, there is a perception by women of increased pressure to work harder than their male counterparts, and that their actions are more highly examined than their male counterparts. It is evident from the findings in this research that some of the participants felt that they needed to work harder to prove their credibility. Women, claimed (Liddle & Josh as cited in Nath, 2000) that they are mistakenly stereotyped as being less knowledgeable, less able to meet the demands of the job, less competent than men, and in general have to work harder than men to get the same results. If Aeysha's comments are viewed in the light of the comment above, then one can appreciate her frustrations. These findings are partially supported by research done by Jackson (2001) who indicated that women's ideas are repeatedly reduced or ignored.

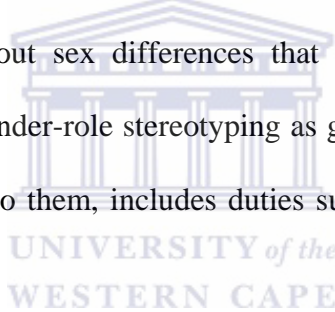
The next section deals with the second aspect of the theme of differential treatment, i.e. the relationship between gender bias in the workplace of these female sport administrators and gender-role stereotyping

4.3.2 Gender-role stereotyping

This sub-section explores gender-role stereotyping as a form of differential treatment in the workplace. In this section, each participant's responses regarding gender-role stereotyping are addressed.

4.3.2.1 Experiences of gender-role stereotyping

In this section, the meanings each participant gave to gender-role stereotyping are offered and the manner in which these are applied in the organisations they work is described. According to Davis (2003) gender-role stereotyping is directly related to the traditional beliefs about sex differences that lead to unequal treatment. The participants interpreted gender-role stereotyping as gender roles which were ascribed to them. This, according to them, includes duties such as taking minutes or making tea for meetings.



From the participants' responses, the following key points were raised by them.

Dolly claimed that gender roles are imposed on her. Noeleen said she is aware that gender roles are ascribed to her and that these are in conflict with her desire to be acknowledged as an equal. Alice acknowledged that she ascribed to gendered roles despite her intentions not to do so. Aeysha resented that fact that she was expected to perform tasks just because she is a woman.

The following discussion elaborates on the participants' experiences of gender-role stereotyping as introduced above and substantiates the conclusions offered.

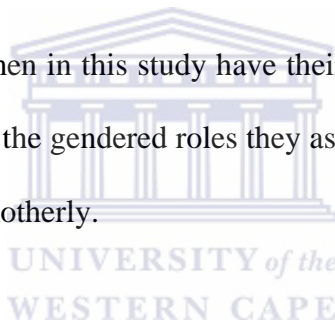
Dolly offered a scenario from her personal encounters with her husband to illustrate that she has to negotiate her position in her relationship with her husband with regard to gender-role stereotyping in their domestic life. She explained that when her husband made her tea some evenings while she is doing sport administrative work at home, it sometimes gets cold before she can drink it. She said; *'he screams because I let it get cold because I was busy doing work'*.

Dolly claimed that at work she will not assume roles gendered as female and therefore will not take minutes in a meeting but she admits to frequently making tea at work and voluntarily attributed this to *'the mommy in me'*. Dolly's comment suggests it takes an effort from her to refute the assumption of gendered in the workplace.

In the first interview, Noeleen denied that she ascribed to gender-role stereotyping. In her second interview she acknowledged that she performed tasks gendered as female without realising it. She admitted that this is *'because you are in that pattern and don't even think about it because it is expected of you to do it'*. Similarly Alice said that *'we are women and funnily enough we do that'* which indicates that like both Dolly and Noeleen, she too ascribes to gender roles.

Aeysha said that even though she knows that gender-role stereotyping exists in her workplace, she does not allow herself to be intimidated to ascribe to it. Aeysha also indicated that males have tried to impose gender roles on her '*but I never gave them the satisfaction*'. She says that '*just because we are female does not mean that you have to feel intimidated and do certain things*'. She will however make tea in meetings because she does not believe that making tea is a task which subordinates women. In her opinion: '*it's how you view it*'. Men may also perform these tasks and not be intimidated by doing so.

It appears that all the women in this study have their own assumptions about what is permissible with regard to the gendered roles they assume i.e. whether it is acceptable to take minutes or being motherly.



According to Foster (1999), management is an activity associated with male stereotypical attributes of competitiveness, hostility and rationality. The deep-rooted power structures in modern society places men in central and women in subordinate positions which involve domestic responsibilities, taking minutes or making tea. Research conducted by Eitzen and Sage (1997) showed that society envisages and socialises its young to ascribe to social role expectations for males and females in general. This is evident in the participants' experiences as previously discussed. All the respondents admit that it is an innate quality women have when they do things, such as making coffee or taking minutes. These findings debunk the findings of Jackson (2001) who suggested that women believe that men in their organisations

respect them as potential leaders and did not support stereotypical beliefs about women in the workplace. Although this is the ideal situation within the sport environment, this is not true for the participants in this study. According to the South African Sports Commission (2004), gender bias is practiced in the workplace of many administrators as the gender roles ascribed to them are practiced by many sporting organisations across the country.

As the researcher, I was able to create an awareness in Noeleen with regard to her experiences of the way she ascribed to gendered roles in the workplace. Consequently, she was able to question her part in supporting gender bias and her own marginalisation in her organisation and not only ascribe them to the effect of other's attitudes and actions. This added value to her contributions in the subsequent interviews and was empowering for Noeleen as well.

The next section covers the second theme of this study i.e. organisational fit.

4.4 Organisational Fit

In this section, the responses of the participants' with regard to organisational fit are discussed. Organisational fit refers to the level of comfort or discomfort experienced by women in their organisations as a result of them being male dominated (Cassel & Walsh as cited in Simpson, 2000). It concerns with the way in which women compliment an organisation especially one which is male dominated. More specifically, this section covers questions about: (1) 'why men resist women's entry

into sport’, (2) ‘why women are excluded from certain issues in the workplace’, (3) ‘what ability women have to make decisions and take authority in their places of work’, (4) ‘do women have to work harder to prove their capabilities in the male dominated environment of sport’ and (5) ‘are these participants seen as token members in their organisations.’

4.4.1 Participants’ experiences of resistance and exclusion

According to Simpson (2000) women in the workplace can encounter blatant resistance which includes sexist bullying or hostile behaviour. Overt resistance claims, as explained by Simpson (2000), acts as key criteria for exclusion and demarcating women as outcasts if they fail to fully participate. Jackson (2001) indicated that men are perceived as leaders within their organisations and women are seen as supportive followers and are therefore excluded from informal groups. Participants in this study were divided on the issue as to whether men resist women’s entry into the administrative domain of the sport. They referred to sport in general and also commented on their personal experiences of being excluded.

From the participants’ responses, the following key points were raised by them.

Dolly was resentful of the way she had witnessed and experienced men’s resistance to women’s advancement in administration in her sport code. Noeleen, in contrast, reported that her male counterparts and those involved at the administrative level in her sport code encouraged women. Aeysha was of the opinion that men in sport

administrative and leadership positions do indeed resist women's entry into this level of sport. However, she also claimed that gender-role stereotyping and other societal factors such as religion, and the way women lack confidence to assert themselves, also play a role in this resistance and exclusion. Finally, Alice argued that the resistance of men to women entering at the leadership level of sport administration lies with them (the men) knowing the demands that such positions place on the individual. She was making a claim that the men were protecting their own interests because their resistance had more to do with the reluctance to share domestic responsibilities and sacrifice their own (leisure) lifestyles if their female partners increased their (the females) administrative load.

The following discussion elaborates on the participants' experiences of resistance and exclusion as introduced above.

In Dolly's case, she spoke of feeling '*less of a human being*' and even '*demeaned*' as she observed the way in which men resist women's advancement in sport. In addition, she complained of feeling '*angry*' and '*hopeless*' in the face of the resistance she sometimes encountered from the men in her place of work. According to Dolly, *women will always be treated differently (in sport)*'. She has experienced the way men treated the female counterparts in sport differently. She claimed that, they (the men) see these women as having a lower intellectual and conversational level. She was of the opinion that the resistance stemmed from the way men felt threatened by the increasing number of women entering leadership positions in sport

as this had previously been the domain of men. In this regard Dolly exclaimed: *'they (the men) feel threatened by women'*. The situation annoyed Dolly and she was very resentful of what she saw as a backlash against women because men, she said, *'are afraid'* that women will prove to be more competent than them. She retorted: *'they (men) are afraid that women will definitely do the job better than them and they (women) do'*.

Unlike Dolly, Noeleen reported that men do not resist women's entry into sport. She reported that men are trying to encourage women to participate and become actively involved in sport. She illustrates her view by referring to increased female membership of her particular sport code. Increased female membership could mean they are able to apply for more funding for that sport. She said: *'I think our men are actually trying to encourage it now because this is one of the portfolios we are going to need assistance with. If we can prove that we support women's sport and we can show numbers in our membership and we can show our growth and our structure and our transformation, we actually can get our grade up and we can get our funding easier'*. Notwithstanding this claim, Noeleen was of the opinion that in her sport code, the only time she is excluded is when she was unable to attend a meeting due to the fact that she was at another venue. However, she expressed that this is not really exclusion because if something is discussed she will eventually know about it via the minutes of that particular meeting which was missed.

As a researcher, my view is that the ease with which Noeleen claims that men do not resist (her) entry at a leadership level belies the way in which her years of experience as a director of that sport code, combined with her strength of character tends to reduce tendencies on the part of her male colleagues to resist her entry into a leadership position. In other words, at a glance, Noeleen's comment suggests that the men in her organisation are without gender bias and that there is no resistance from them to serve under female leadership. However, she had previously made a statement about her ability *'to force myself'* and that she does not experience any difficulty in getting her own views across. She had also previously reported that the apparent absence of resistance is conditional on the men's belief that an increased female membership means more funding for that sport code. This could have been explored further to highlight the value of previous leadership experiences and confidence levels in meetings, to question her ability to challenge any resistance from male counterparts.

Like Dolly, Aeysha was also of the opinion that any resistance on the part of men to women's entry into sport leadership positions could be related to the degree to which they (the men) felt threatened. Further to this Aeysha claimed that: *'men are very challenged by women who are highly educated'*. Be that as it may, as a woman of colour, Aeysha is adamant that women have the right to realise their potential as leaders in the sport domain. She reported that every time she goes into meetings she makes a point of challenging any signs of gender bias. She also claimed that there is a *'willingness to allow women in (to sport leadership positions) as long as there are no*

significant changes'. This is an indication that the intention of many organisations is to allow women access to leadership positions in sport, however, it appears that these organisations could just be window dressing their organisations. Aeysha also acknowledges she is a champion of the rights of women previously disadvantaged by the apartheid government. She exclaimed: *'how society views and accepts you depends a lot on how you are as an individual and (in turn) if you as an individual are affected by a lot of stuff'*

So, when Aeysha refers to *'how society views and accepts you'* she means that you are accepted in society based on ideological assumptions which encourage men and women to conform to norms within a certain social structure such as sport. When she says: *'(it) depends a lot on how you are as an individual'* she refers to the type of personality one has and the personal choices you are able to make as an individual. When she says: *'if you as an individual are affected by a lot of stuff'* she refers to how societal practices affect you as an individual. These societal practices are based on the power relations in sport where the social norm within society, which leads to domination of men over women in society as well as in sport. These practices lead to men's resistance over women entering into the realm of sport.

Finally, as a female president in a female dominated sport code, Alice is less exposed to gender bias as experienced by the other three participants. Alice seems unable to relate to experiences of exclusion and resistance in the same way as her fellow participants. She can only speculate that if men did resist women's entry into the top

echelons of sport management, it would be at that level where they have to sacrifice their free time.

She claimed that *'men will feel they will not be able to live the liberating life and would have to give up their own leisure time'*. At first Alice refused to acknowledge any resistance on the part of men, then in a follow-up interview, she conceded on this point and reported: *'yes, some men, not all men'* resist women's entry into sport.

As a researcher, I can relate to all the frustrations expressed by Aeysha. As a woman of colour, sport participant and sport leader, I have witnessed the way race, gender and class combine to thwart efforts of women to be accepted as part of the decision making structures, especially in sporting codes which were previously controlled by white men. Unfortunately now in 2008, twenty years after unity sport talks which took place in 1988, the resistance to women's entry into sport leadership positions is not limited to white men. In fact, it would seem that men of colour are now protecting and competing with women for those much sought after (and limited) top sport leadership positions.

Simpson (2000) claimed that the dynamics around organisational fit fluctuate from being non-threatening for females to the extreme of being sexist and hostile. She explained further that often females are subjected to convoluted practices in the workplace which, although associated with the dominant male culture, are not experienced by the women as being intimidating. Foster (1999) referred to the

difficulty women have in accessing authority positions, because, she claimed that in a patriarchal structure, (like sport), the official authority lies predominantly in the hands of men. If the dominant thinking on the part of males in these organisations is that responsibilities of women in sport organisations should be allocated along traditional roles of women, as played out in the home, then women sport leaders will of course encounter some measure of resistance as they seek promotion into top administrative positions. Theberge (1994) offered three reasons why men resist women's entry into sport. Firstly, men have a desire to maintain sport as a socializing agent that prepares them for adult roles in the public sector, particularly in the workplace and political life; secondly, in order to maintain hierarchical rankings of sex roles and thirdly, to promote an exclusively male realm that allows for expressiveness and solidarity amongst the males themselves. Like Hargreaves and Jones (2001), Aeysha attributed the lack of women in sport leadership positions in South Africa to a combination of race, ethnicity, class and gender.

In the next section under organisational fit, the ability of the participants to make decisions and take authority in their places of (sport) work is discussed.

4.4.2 Decision making

Ellison (2001) indicated that horizontal segregation results in streaming women into the non-managerial less strategic decision making roles of an organisation. The four South African female sport leaders in this study highlighted some of the complexities and challenges with regard to decision making processes and procedures in sport organisations.

From the participants' responses, the following key points were raised by them.

Dolly claimed that she felt part of the decision making process in her workplace even if she did not agree with the final decision adopted. Noeleen experienced little difficulty when making decisions and accepted that the authority to take the final decisions lies with the executive committee of her sport organisation. Aeysha also reported that the decision making process in her organisation did not pose any particular challenges for her and highlighted the need for all decision makers (male and female) to know the procedures and constitution. Similarly, Alice experienced no resistance to her being part of the decision making process in her organisation and acknowledged the support she received from her co-executive members.

The following discussion elaborates on the participants' experiences of decision making as introduced above.

Dolly said that as a deputy president of her sport organisation she takes the initiative and interacts with the president who relies on her to give him input on what is happening in and around their particular sport code. The fact that Dolly claimed that she felt part of the decision making process is accurate because of the contribution and support she gives the president of her organisation. She says: *'I'd rather seek to find a solution to the problem, so it's easy for me to make a decision and never get much recognition, and if I don't like what the prevailing decision on the table is and I'm out numbered, I will accept it in good faith, carry it through, support it, and it might not be what I wanted'*. Although her advice is most probably valued, it appears that decisions making in her organisation rest with the president, and he makes most of the decisions based thereon. If this is the case, then it would appear that Dolly is part of the decision making process even though she is sometimes outnumbered when she wishes to make a decision. It appears that the process of decision making is a democratic one.

Noeleen cannot officially make decisions because she is *'an administrator without a voice'*. This means that she is not allowed to make any comments to take any decisions as she is not an executive member of her organisation. Her knowledge and expertise as a past executive member in her sport organisation, has resulted in her views being carefully considered in discussions by executive members. This is highlighted in her comments where she says: *'I make a decision because of the knowledge of the game. When it comes to club politics then I will tell them [club members and other officials] I'll get back to them shortly and I will call exec and tell*

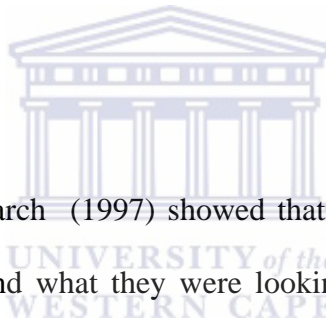
them how I feel about the situation and they will discuss and take my information as well'. However, she also indicated that in any case she could not make decisions by herself as the final decision lies with the executive members.

Unlike the work done by Noleen and her organisation, Aeysha indicated that because she and her staff are responsible for providing a sport service to all students and to the larger communities within the Western Cape, she reported that being in a position of authority she had to make *'a lot of decisions'*. When making decisions, she is cognisant of the fact that when taking the authority to make decisions, she has to take into account way people will respond to her as she sees herself as an assertive and a *'straightforward person'*. By *'straightforward'* Aeysha referred to her personality and her ability to be forthright and outspoken when making decisions. In doing so, her staff, may feel excluded by the manner in which the decisions are made. Therefore, she maintains that there is also *'a human aspect of it'*- and one can *'never personalise it'*. By this she means one should be reflexive and not biased when making decisions. Aeysha indicated that it is especially important to manage people in a participatory management style and when implementing decisions as all staff will be involved in the decision making process and therefore she will not be seen as authoritative.

Alice says that said that she found *'it fairly easy, but won't make a decision'* on her own. Even though she is the president of her sport organisation, she said she first consults with her executive members before making a decision in order to get

approval from everyone. This is a democratic process by consulting with all the relevant members in her organisation before making a decision. Alice indicated that a situation has to be thoroughly evaluated before exercising authority. She said people will not listen to you if you dictate to them. What was not clarified was whether the co-members to which Alice referred were male or female.

It is evident that the participants in this study are able to make decisions alongside their male co-workers. This means that there is no evidence to support Ellison's (2001) claim that women are streamlined into less strategic decision making roles of an organisation.



In 1997 Hargreaves' research (1997) showed that South African sportswomen felt that they lacked power and what they were looking for was to share equally in a democratic process at all levels of decision making. Ten years later, the findings in this study do not indicate that these women felt that they were powerless when making decisions. Whether this is an accurate reflection of the situation for sportswomen in general in South Africa needs to be investigated. Hargreaves (1997) also indicated that transformation within social institutions, like sport, where men construct their power and privilege over others, has complimented the general absence of women in decision making positions and reflects deep seated power imbalances between men and women in South African sport. This was confirmed in 2004 by the South African Sports Commission who reported in a policy document that sportswomen in South Africa are not given enough opportunities for participating

in significant decision making processes and procedures and if necessary, gender equity will be forced on men.

It appears that since 2004, the policies, processes and procedures implemented by the SASC has impacted on the functionality of the organisations in which these women work and contributed to efficient decision making. This is reflected in the responses of this study because there is no evidence to suggest that participants in this study are lacking opportunities to make decisions in their organisations. In fact all indicated that they are part of the decision making process in their organisations.

There is no evidence in this study to indicate that the lack of decision making is intentional on the part of the men in the organisations. Further to this, there is also no evidence to suggest that the participants in this study are not given an opportunity to make decisions. So it seems it is not only about lack of opportunity when in leadership positions, but also the absence of women in leadership further impedes females in sport from making decisions at a level of leadership.

In the following section each participant commented on their experiences regarding the absence of women in sport leadership positions.

4.4.3 Absence of women in leadership positions

According to Hovden (2004), the absence of women in leadership positions in sport is due to cultural and structural consequences of male dominance. In her view, the selection criteria of leaders benefits men more than women because corporate leadership experience is given preference. Participants in this study were divided on the issue as to what they attribute the absence of female sports leaders. They commented on their perceptions of women in leadership positions and then offered their explanations as to why they felt there are few women in leadership positions.

All the participants were of the opinion that there were not enough females in top sport management positions. In addition, Dolly's perception was that even some female managers believed that only men were capable of running an organisation. Noeleen felt that women lacked knowledge and that more women's forums in sport should be established for capacity building of young women and girls. Aeysha felt that despite the scarcity of female sport leaders, the current young female leaders today are passionate about what they do and they are confident in what they do because they believe in what they do. Alice implied that the general scarcity of women in sport leadership position could be attributed to their lack of knowledge and skills in this regard. She claimed, in addition, that some women take up leadership positions before they know what it entails.

The following discussion elaborates on the participants' interpretation relating to the absence of women in leadership positions as introduced above.

Dolly's perception of other females is manifested in the belief that only men are able to lead. She says: *'and I must say the western province women always felt that the men were the leaders...They [men] only could drive [lead], and that mindset in unity carried over'*. She acknowledged that this is only a perception but it seems to be an attitude which many women in her organisation have adopted. This she said has ultimately resulted in the absence of females in leadership positions. She said this did not mean that it is her experience neither her perception that women do not have the ability to lead. Dolly said that before unification of sport in South Africa (post apartheid) her sport organisation was predominantly run by women and there was only one male on the executive. Females in her sport code were very strong leaders during the apartheid era and although they were responsible to the dominant sporting culture run by white males at the time, female leaders of her sport code were in charge of the sport code which operated from one sporting body with no interference from the men, even the white males)

According to Dolly something changed in the status of women leaders in her sport code since the unification of South African sport (post 1988). She claimed that from that time and now, there is an assumption that men were and still are the leaders: She said: *'they (men) could only drive, and that mindset in unity carried over'*. This in her opinion has contributed to the general absence of women in leadership positions.

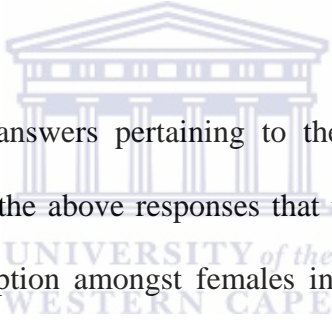
Dolly was an active member in the resistance movement in apartheid South Africa. She was instrumental in using sport as a site of resistance against racism and sexism

not only against the white government but also the men. She was an active member of SACOS, a multiracial sporting body who advocated for non-racial sport during the apartheid movement and used sport as a vehicle for social change.

Further to Dolly's comments, Noeleen felt that there is an absence of women in top positions because women lack the commitment and skills to lead. According to her; *'women no longer have commitment to the sport'*. She added; *'I don't think the passion is there anymore'*. Further to this she says that there is no development for female sport leaders in her sport organisation and that the organisation should train women in leadership. This is an example of another opportunity missed. As the researcher I could have questioned Noeleen further and asked her why she felt that women have lost their passion and commitment to the sport. I could have also asked her why there was no mentorship programmes in her organisation. I did not do this as it was not the part of the focus of this study, but will be offered as a recommendation in Chapter 5.

Aeysha attributed the general absence of women in leadership positions in South African sport to the challenges they face with regard to the barriers which constrain women in their pursuit of leadership positions. These barriers include childcare and domestic responsibilities. She said there are *'personal challenges, personality issues, family challenges have a lot to do with it.... If you are a mother that's a major challenge'*.

Alice supported Noeleen's views and stated that; '*commitment is lacking*' in some women. She added that they are not prepared to take responsibility when there are problems. She further claimed that even though many women are keen to take up executive positions in her organisation, from her experience she was of the opinion that they do so without really knowing what the job entails. According to her, this could also be a potential problem because she is also of the opinion that if you are in a leadership position, you have to do so to the '*best of your ability*'. Maybe the women in Alice's organisation are doing their best, but their best is not good enough for benefit of the organisation.



When we seek possible answers pertaining to the lack of women in leadership positions, it is clear from the above responses that there are many possibilities. For example, there is a perception amongst females in sport, that leadership roles are reserved for men. There is also the perception that there is a lack of commitment and passion on the part of women and this could be attributed to a lack of training and skill development. Possibly, there is no mentoring from males to females as both the genders could learn much from one another.

Lack of commitment and passion has also been offered as a possible reason for the absence of women in leadership positions. There is a possibility that it is not an absence of passionate and committed amongst women, but that women are constrained in ways that men are not, such as taking care of the family. This supports two ideas; a) women cannot commit themselves into leadership positions due to

family responsibilities as highlighted by Aeysha, b) in taking responsibility of the family suggests that women ascribe to gendered roles and further supports evidence stated previously with regards to women constantly having to negotiate gender roles.

Jackson (2001) found there is a perception that men are considered to be leaders within their organisations and women are seen as supportive followers. However, she also claims that women are also less predisposed to pursue leadership roles as there is a perception amongst the women that leadership roles are reserved for men. Jones (2001), The South African Sports Commission (2004) and Roberts (Personal Communication, 2007), to mention a few indicated that during the apartheid era South African sport reproduced exceptional power and privilege of white men, but was also a site of inequalities between men and women in all groups. It was as a result of apartheid that sport became popular because it was used as a site of resistance against white supremacy. Hendricks and Jones (1992) indicated that some of the challenges women faces, as highlighted by Aeysha, are but a few of the numerous constraints sportswomen face. Jackson (2000) also suggested that a personal factor such as family commitments creates a career barrier for women pursuing leadership positions. This argument is valid for both Aeysha and Alice. There is a possibility that in Noeleen's organisation, the women might still have the passion to pursue leadership positions, but it this is overshadowed by personal factors as mentioned by Jackson (2000).

In the following section the participants offered their views regarding female sport leaders and tokenism.

4.4.4 Tokenism

According to Laws (1975) tokenism is a form of interclass mobility within a gender-class system. The concept of tokenism has been widely used to explain the difficulties women face as they enter predominantly male professions. Zimmer (1988) referred to tokenism as women's occupational experiences and their reaction to such experiences (of gender bias) with reference to the proportion of women in an organisation. This section includes a discussion of each participant's comment on the meaning she gave to tokenism and also her experiences of tokenism in her place of work. For the purposes of this study the participants' experienced and interpreted tokenism in relation to how seriously they felt they were taken in the workplace.

4.4.4.1 Experiences of tokenism

In this section, the participants' comments on their experiences of tokenism in their organisations and on whether they were taken as seriously as their male counterparts are discussed.

From the participants' responses with regard to tokenism, the following key points were raised by them.

The women in this study did not consider themselves to be token members. Dolly believed that she is taken seriously and she attributed this partly to her contributions made to liberation struggle during the apartheid years. Noleen reported that she is taken seriously and attributed this mostly to her previous experience as the director of her sport code. She claimed that she does not feel like a token member because the committee members are voted in by the entire sport code membership. Aeysha conveyed that she had worked hard to be in her leadership position and had been appointed on merit. Alice claimed that she was respected and taken seriously and thereby earned the position of president in her sport code.

The following discussion elaborates on the participants' experiences of tokenism as introduced above.



Dolly claimed that because she was voted in by the membership of her sport code, she is not a token member. Dolly holds two leadership positions, one at a national level and one at provincial level. She is firm in her belief that she was voted into the national position on the basis of merit. She retorted: '*I was the best person for the job*'. At the provincial level, Dolly holds the position of deputy president of her organisation. It is at a provincial level that the situation is not all that clear: Dolly felt that on merit she should have got the presidency and claimed that she '*lost that (the presidency) because I was female*'. The current incumbent of this predominantly female sport is a male, as was his predecessor. Her disappointment was evident in the interview and she made numerous references about her ability to '*analyse*' situations

and to think '*logically*', implying that she is valued and that her appointment to the deputy president position was not a token gesture. She claimed she is in this position to '*effect change*' and that she can do this '*in terms of thinking, in terms of logic, in terms of analysing situations, in terms of knowing how to succumb*'

The fact that Dolly is in a leadership position on the basis of merit is indicative of the fact that she is not a token member of the organisation in which she works and is evident in her statements as highlighted above. The fact that she holds two leadership positions is evident that Dolly's level of work(wo)manship is of a high level and her ability to '*effect change*' is great. However, this does not mean that she is really respected and taken seriously by her male counterparts just because she is in a leadership position. There lies a possibility that she is being used for her intellectual capacity and previous experience.

At the time of the interview, Noeleen claimed that she is actually '*taken more seriously*' than her male counterparts. She attributes this to the fact that she is mentoring the current director of her sport organisation. It is clear from her responses that Noeleen, as a past director of her organisation, has earned respect and credibility amongst her male counterparts and she capitalises on this. She explained that she is '*always telling him what is and what is not allowed*'. She referred to herself as an '*administrator without a voice*'. By this Noeleen meant that because she was no longer in the directorship position, and was employed as an administrator, a condition

of her employment as a provincial administrator was one where she was not allowed to vote in executive meetings, nor give any comments.

The interesting feature about the position Noeleen finds herself in is that even though she is '*without a voice*', i.e. cannot vote or give comments, she is still able to make suggestions and offer advice because of her previous experience as an executive member. This again is based on her years of experience and expertise which has made her a valuable member of her organisation.

Aeysha was equally adamant that she is not a token leader. In her view she has '*worked myself up the ranks*' and deserves the status her position affords her. Her resentment at the time of the interview was that she did not feel respected by her subordinates in her own employed place of work.

The link Aeysha makes between '*being taken seriously*', '*being respected*' and '*tokenism*' is worth noting. It is not clear from her responses whether Aeysha's emphasis on '*being taken seriously*' as a leader is more important than being associated with tokenism. What is clear from her responses is that according to her tokenism does not imply respect or being valued. Consequently, any suggestion that she was a token leader was rejected outright. This assertiveness with which this stance was taken did not invite further discussion on the topic and so, as the researcher, I did not press the point. Currently, tokenism in South Africa usually manifests as appointing a female in a male dominated domain to address the female-

male equity issues, or in appointing a person of colour in a predominantly historically white organisation. Therefore, as a white president of an all-female sport code, Alice could not relate to the idea that she could in any way be a token leader. This could account for Alice's retort: '*there is no such thing as a token member*' in her sport organisation.

The findings with regard to tokenism show that these participants do not entertain any idea that they might be token leaders. Like Alice, they either denied that it exists or claimed, like Dolly and Noeleen that being '*voted in*' proves the absence of tokenism, or like Aeysha who pointed out that her achievements are based on hard work. There appears to be some contradiction between comments made by the participants about the seriousness with which they felt they are viewed by colleagues and previous claims about not having their views, comments or suggestions acknowledged by their male counterparts. This apparent contradiction could be attributed to the fact that the participants are equating tokenism with being taken seriously.

The commitment to transformation has been the focal point of the South African government's aim in addressing historical and social issues in the light of constitutional reform. Due to this, tokenism, which is linked to transformation, has become a contentious issue within many organisations in South Africa. Tokenism is blamed for appointing token-members into organisations to redress interclass mobility. According to Padayachee, Desai and Vahed (2004:253) sport in South Africa is a site of '*discerning disagreements over what transformation means*' i.e.

merit versus affirmative action. These disagreements reflect the broader tensions over how restructuring in South African should be addressed. The findings of the study by Corocan-Nantes and Roberts (2002) revealed that females in the workplace are not taken as seriously as their male counterparts. This is not the case in this study. All four of the participants expressed strongly that they were not token members of their organisations and because they were taken seriously. Noeleen's profound belief in her own strength and abilities as an administrator challenges the findings of Corocan-Nantes and Roberts (2002) regarding males being taken more seriously in the workplace. It is clear that like the participants in Ragins study (cited in Jackson, 2001), Aeysha felt that as a woman, she is expected to prove herself and therefore has achieved all she has '*due to hard work and commitment on my part*'. It is unthinkable to Aeysha that she should still have to be subjected to what Simpson (2000:5) referred to as 'greater performance pressure' than the 'dominant group' (i.e. the males in her places of work).

Tokenism in South Africa has been highlighted by various sporting institutions across the country. For example at a recent quarterly symposium entitled Sports Talk held by the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport, issues around quota systems in South African sport were discussed in Cape Town on the 16th October 2007. At the symposium the inclusion of quota players in teams was covered and whether or not they were quality players. This conference failed to address quota systems in the sporting workplace of all people involved in sport administration as the emphasis was

mainly on sport participation. This is evident of how quota systems are addressed and fails to recognise tokenism as equally important.

The next section covers an equally sensitive issue i.e. harassment and intimidation in the workplace. This was the emerging theme in this study

4.5 Harassment and Intimidation

In this particular section the responses with regard to each participant's understanding and experiences of the emerging theme of harassment and intimidation as aspects of gender bias in the workplace will be discussed. Notwithstanding the fact that harassment is related to intimidation, for clarity, the responses regarding harassment will first be addressed and then those on intimidation. This also serves to illustrate how the participants' experienced the differences that exist between harassment and intimidation.

This theme of harassment and intimidation emerged out of questions which were presented to the participant's during the first round of interviews. In the first set of interviews participants were asked questions pertaining to their ability to assume authority in their places of work and whether their male counterparts supported them in this regard. The participants made reference to the way the responses of their male counterparts in this regard included suggestive (sexual) comments about the female body. Consequently, this was explored further in the subsequent interviews. In addition, while decoding the transcripts from the interviews, as the researcher I found

that the participants also made reference to feeling intimidated. In this way the theme harassment and intimidation emerged.

4.5.1 Experiences of harassment

This section does more than just explore aspects of harassment in the workplace, but it highlights the complexities of these women's experiences of harassment in the workplace.

Unlike Simelane (2001), Weiler's (2004) interpretation of harassment does not make reference to intimidation. According to Weiler (2004) harassment is an offensive environment created by verbal, non-verbal and physical behaviour of a (sexual) nature. It is any form of unwanted and unasked for deeds which may range from repulsive remarks, physical contact to plays of violence.

Simelane (2001:6) further defined sexual harassment as:

unwelcomed and unwanted sexual conduct such as verbal comments, abuse, gestures or physical contact of a sexual nature by an individual or a group which is judged by the recipient(s) to have resulted in...mental, physical or social discomfort, demotion, creation of an intimidating or hostile environment.

Simelane's definition of harassment which includes reference to intimidation and sexual harassment is relevant to the South African context.

From the participants' responses with regard to harassment, the following key points were raised by them.

Currently none of the participants claimed to have been harassed in their current workplace. However, Dolly had experienced harassment prior to assuming her current leadership position. Aeysha openly admitted to harassment taking place in her organisation. Noeleen claimed never to have experienced any form of harassment and was not sure whether any other women in her organisation have experienced it and if they did, they never reported it. Similarly, Alice also claimed to have never been harassed in her workplace.



The following discussion elaborates on the participants' experiences of harassment as introduced above.

Dolly claimed that in the last ten years she had not experienced any forms of harassment in her workplace, but added '*But before that, yes....it is about knowing how to handle each of them (the males) and what to say to them (the males)...it is how you treat it*'. She attributed this to her ability to set clear boundaries. In this regard she claimed: '*If you don't have the conviction or the courage to say anything about me to my face then certainly not to going to loose sleep over you*'. Dolly also reported that she never experienced having her body commented on and as she would be the first one to comment on her own body and felt okay with it when anybody else commented after she did.

Similarly, Noeleen responded that she had also not been subjected to harassment in her place of work. She attributed this to the professional relationship she has with her male colleagues. Her view was that *there is an understanding in terms of what one's work is about*. Although adamant that she is not sexually harassed at work, Noeleen reported that she is unaware if other females in her organisation were experiencing any forms of harassment. Noeleen again attributed her strength of character and her strong personality as the reason for her not being the target of sexual harassment.

Unlike Dolly and Noeleen, Aeysha claimed to have witnessed incidents of harassment in her workplace even though she personally has not experienced this. She said: *'Oh yes, definitely- subtle, straightforward...but I can be very abrupt and should they try to pass a comment, I will insult them'*. Aeysha is a very confident and educated woman. One way she ensures that she is not a target of sexual (or any other form of) harassment is by being very assertive, perhaps even aggressiveness. She uses these and aloofness as her tools to combat harassment. It is particularly insightful that she claimed that *'sexual harassment'* can be as a *'result of how you behave'*. She made a connection between possible incidents of sexual harassment and *'the clothes (women wear)'* and *'how you behave within that environment'*. The way Aeysha seemed to create a balance between how she dressed and the comments this might solicit by accepting compliments from male co-workers and *'never looking back to see whether the person is staring'*. Notwithstanding her readiness to *'insult'* anyone who makes a *'pass at (her)'*, Aeysha raised the issue of what constitutes sexual

harassment. According to her, *'it is how one interprets a (sexual) comment'*. *'Sometimes'*, she says, *'no sexual or harmful intent'* was intended.

Much like the other participants, Alice also claimed that she did not experience any forms of sexual harassment in her workplace. She attributed this to the common deference that exists in her female dominated sport code: *'no, I think that there is mutual respect'*. In Alice's organisation where there are predominantly females, the women are less at risk to experience harassment from males.

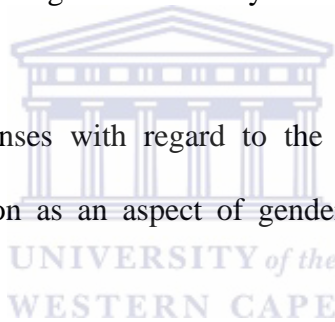
An explanation as to the reasons why these women do not experience harassment in their places of work is given by Fasting (2005). She suggested that as women get older they are able to understand behaviour which is categorised as harassment in their past is defined by them presently as such some years later. Furthermore, the fact that all the participants actively participated in sport when they were younger adds credence to what Bart (cited in Fasting, 2005) claimed about female athletes growing older and becoming more adept at protecting themselves as well as avoiding or escaping potentially dangerous harassment circumstances which they may experience. In 2001 Simelane's (2001) found that more women were of the opinion that victims are highly responsive to sexual harassment.

As the researcher, I did not further explore whether females do harass males in the workplace. That was beyond the scope of this study. In the following section a related issue i.e. intimidation will be discussed

4.5.2 Experiences of intimidation

A review article written by Randall (nd) indicated that intimidation is practiced and used as a weapon by men to discourage women becoming leaders and/or participating in sport. Similarly, Simelane (2001) suggested that, irrespective of the definition given to sexual harassment, it is directly related to intimidation, exploitation, discrimination and power. Furthermore Connell (2006) showed that women who do feel discriminated against have complained of sexist denigration. Examples of repeated jokes against women include being felt up, stared at, having their bodies commented upon and not being taken seriously as co-workers.

In this section the responses with regard to the participants' understanding and experiences of intimidation as an aspect of gender bias in the workplace will be discussed.



From the participants' responses with regard to intimidation, the following key points were raised by them.

When it came to intimidation, all the participants except for Alice, claimed to have experienced some form of intimidation in their current workplace. However, from the responses it seems that none of the participants actually felt intimidated by the men in their organisations. For example, the three participants who could relate to personal incidents of intimidation were as follows: Dolly mentioned feeling disappointed, Noeleen felt irritation and Aeysha felt resentment. These three women seemed to be

experiencing what Hargreaves (1997) referred to as an uninterrupted struggle with men with regard to male prejudice and chauvinism.

Before discussing their experiences, it is important to note, that some of the participants were referring to some males (not all males) in organisations in which they work some of the time (not all of the time) displaying behaviours which lean towards intimidation. What I as the researcher did not explore was what constitutes intimidation and the comparison between various meanings given to intimidation.

The following discussion elaborates on the participants' experiences of intimidation as introduced above.

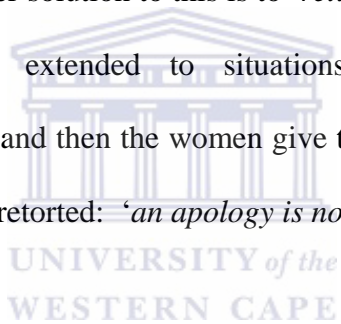


When asked whether they have experienced any forms of intimidation in their places of work, the responses were as follows:

Dolly was of the opinion that men in her organisation did attempt to intimidate her and this made her feel *'betrayed'*. She reported: *'I know them all and I know what to say to each one, but I'm not really intimidated by them...I do not allow myself to be intimidated'*. She did not openly challenge such behaviour but worked hard to ensure that she was not intimidated by the men in her organisation. Noeleen was clearly irritated by any efforts on the part of the men to intimidate women in her organisation. She claimed: *'it comes down to character...I think its more understanding what one's work is about'*. Her approach ensures she would not

entertain any attempts of intimidation. She was of the opinion that men do not even take the chance in this regard.

Aeysha resented the attempts of any males to intimidate women in various workplaces. She claimed not to be intimidated by the chauvinism and prejudice of males but by the way she is sometimes spoken to. *“I feel intimidated when they (males) speak of things I am not well informed about...”*. She did experience an incident where she was *‘nearly attacked in a meeting’*. Further to this, when she feels intimidated in meetings, her solution to this is to *‘return to my office and research it’*. Aeysha’s resentment is extended to situations where men have behaved inappropriately to women and then the women give the impression that an admission of guilt is acceptable. She retorted: *‘an apology is not good enough’*.



Alice’s experiences of intimidation are very different from the other three participants. She spoke of the absence of intimidation in her organisation and attributed this to the fact that her co-workers respect one another. Alice reported *“as females we should not be complaining as we are treated well... mutual respect among all working in her organisation’*. In fact, Alice could not relate to the questions on intimidation as can be seen from her response above. The fact that Alice says that they are treated well does not necessarily mean that they are valued equally. Alice also did not indicate who treated them (women in her organisation) well. This was not further explored as Alice seemed to reject any suggestion that she herself or any other females in her organisation were subject to gender bias in the workplace.

Women and Sport International Task Forces (2004) indicated that gender based is likely to result in suffering to women, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work. Studies show that the prevalence of intimidation rates are higher when women have traditionally been underrepresented in workplaces dominated by men (Gutek & Moransen in Fasting, 2005) and lowest in workplaces dominated by women (Grauenholz in Fasting, 2005). The Australian Sports Commission (2005:2) indicated that harassment and intimidation deny sport participants the right to participate in an environment that is 'fun, safe and healthy, and to be treated with respect, dignity and fairness'.

It is evident that although none of the participants experience harassment in their places of work currently, they are aware that it exists in some sports organizations. In addition, all except for Alice are aware of its existence in their places of work

4.6 Summary of results and findings

In this chapter the responses showed that there were practices of differential treatment. In fact, all the participants acknowledged that differential treatment exists in their places of work. Notwithstanding the above, it was pointed out in the discussion that despite acknowledging that differential treatment existed, the participants did not appear to allow it to negatively affect their work.

With regard to differential treatment, the literature indicated that female administrators are more alike than disparate in the demographic and personal characteristics (Gregory cited in Nath, 2000). Although men were still dominating leading management positions (Wrobel, 2006), women who work in male dominated arenas were more assertive and objective (Acosta & Carpenter, 2003). According to (Corcoran-Nantes & Roberts, 2002), the reason for women not being taken seriously was due to sex segregation in the workplace. This claimed (Reskin, 2002) impeded their chances of taking authority at work. The South African Sports Commission (2004) found that women in South Africa felt that there was less access for them to advance into leadership positions as opposed to men. This could be due to what Coakley (1998) describes as 'corporate cultures', which tend to limit women's access into certain jobs. Even so, Connell (2006) explained that females felt three times more likely to have their views discarded in departmental meetings. Previously Jackson (2001) had reported that women felt their ideas were repeatedly reduced or ignored.

Furthermore, Curry and Jiobu (1984) and Nath (2000) claimed that gender-role stereotyping could lead to exclusion of women from all aspects of society. While some women believed that men respected them as leaders (Jackson, 2001), others felt that they are not given access to financial and information resources and some felt that they had to work harder than men to get the same results (Nath, 2000). Therefore, gender roles ascribed to women classified them as inferior (Eitzen & Sage, 1997). In this regard, the South African Sports Commission (2004) reported women in South

Africa felt that they were excluded from vital meetings where decisions were made. Therefore, not all women in South Africa have benefited from constitutional reform because appropriate leadership behaviours carry stereotypically masculine connotations. This gap between legislation and practice was also reported by Ragins cited in Jackson (2001); Middlehurst (1997) and Whitehead (2003).

As can be seen from the above summary of the literature, there is a clear indication from the literature regarding differential treatment entails. However, the literature does not offer us an in depth understanding of women's experiences of differential treatment the way this study does. This study highlighted the participants' experiences of differential treatment in their places of work as well as their interpretation of their experiences of female sport administrator's contributions in the workplace. It also highlighted these women's experiences of gender-role stereotyping.

Organisational fit was the second theme discussed in this chapter. In this regard, the discussion highlighted the manner in which men resisted women's entry into sport, especially at the level of leadership. In addition, the participants' responses as to whether they were able to exercise their decision making abilities and authority in the workplace was covered in this chapter. The discussion indicated that the participants' were aware that in some sports organisations, including their own, men in fact do resisted women's entry into sport. All the participants were involved in making decisions in their organisations.

With regard to organisational fit, the literature indicated that organisational fit refers to the level of comfort or discomfort experienced by women (Cassel & Walsh cited in Simpson, 2000). This claim Jackson (2001) meant that women were less able to proceed into leadership roles than men and were allocated lower ranked tasks with less visibility. She added that women's actions were more highly examined when they move to higher positions. Women, reported Marvin (2001); Hau Siu Chow and Crawford (2004), felt that organizations allowed barriers which prevented them from feeling included in hierarchical structures and that the people with significant hierarchical power are men. Ultimately, official authority is largely in the hands of men. Foster (1999) added that segregation in the workplace was confined to lower hierarchical levels and that male managers encouraged conventional practices which underpin authority. Further to this, Foster (1999) added that some women in senior management negotiate their positions in isolation from other women.

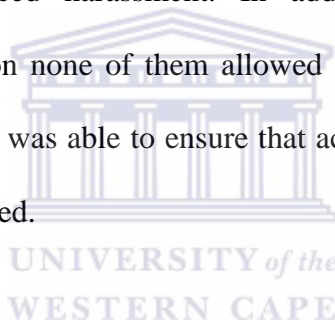
Although sport is a valuable area for encouraging involvement by the most disempowered women (Collins & Kay, 2003), there is only a tiny minority of women reaching genuine positions of power (Evetts cited in Ellison, 2001). This is referred to as vertical segregation. Horizontal segregation refers to the streaming of women into non managerial less strategic decision making positions (Ellison, 2001). Theberge (1994) claimed that men have a desire to maintain sport as a socializing agent and to promote an exclusively male realm which allowed for expressiveness and intimacy. While Claes (2002) stated that there is a presumption that if women do not assume

masculine traits then they would not be able to perform management activities. The South African Sports Commission (2004) found that South African women were frustrated by limited resources and Hargreaves (1997) referred to them as having a lack of autonomy. According to Jackson (2001) there was a common perception that men are viewed as leaders and women as supporters. The Federal Glass Ceiling Commission (2002) reported that the status of minorities and women are saturated in the public sector and according to Samson (1999) racial and gender divisions do not necessarily guarantee women equal opportunities in getting jobs.

As can be seen from the above summary of the literature, there is a clear indication from the literature regarding what organisational fit entails. However, the literature does not offer us an in depth understanding of women's experiences of organisational fit the way this study does. This study highlighted the manner in which men resist women's entry into sport at a leadership level. It also highlighted the decision making power these participants have within their organisations and the amount of authority they are able to take at their places of work.

Harassment and intimidation was the last theme discussed in this chapter. This was an emerging theme and therefore an in depth literature review was not carried out on this theme. However, relevant literature was used to support the findings from this study. Randall (nd) indicated that harassment and intimidation is practiced and used as a weapon by men to discourage women from participating in sport. In addition to this, Connell (2006) indicated that women who felt that they were discriminated

against have complained of sexist defamation. According to Gutek and Moransen as cited in Fasting (2005), intimidation rates were reported to be higher when women have been underrepresented. Fasting (2005) also found that as female athletes grow older, they became more adept at protecting themselves and were able to avoid or escape potentially dangerous harassment circumstances. The discussions highlighted whether women in this study experienced harassment and intimidation. The responses showed that two of the participant's have at some stage in their lives experienced harassment, but do not experience it today, while the other two participants claimed to have never experienced harassment. In addition, the responses regarding experiences of intimidation none of them allowed themselves to be intimidated by their male co workers and was able to ensure that acts of intimidation in their places of work were not entertained.



The section which follows applies the three assumptions of critical theory to the findings of this study. It had been the intention of the researcher to offer a particular interpretation of the findings of this study about gender bias in the sports workplace from the perspective of four top sportswomen leaders by applying sport sociologist Coakley's (1998) three assumptions around critical theory and its application to the domain of sport. However, even though the realities and complexities of these women have been illustrated throughout this chapter, the assumptions made by Coakley (1998) do not conveniently match the findings. Therefore, what follows is an application of the three assumptions of critical theory to the findings of this study, where possible, highlighting any new insights which emerge.

4.7. The application of critical theory assumptions to the findings of this study:

A reflection

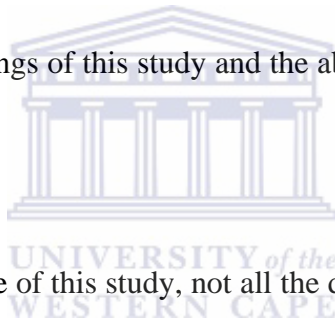
As previously mentioned the basis of critical theory could be summarised into three core assumptions. These are: 1) conflict and agreement exist simultaneously in social life, 2) shared values and agreements are never permanent and 3) the basis for conflict changes position from one location to another based on various circumstances of social life.

It can be seen from the discussion that follows that when these assumptions are applied to the findings of this study, not all the assumptions are relevant to all the themes of this study. It was also previously discussed how different explanations might emerge when these assumptions are applied to different types of research such as feminist research, sociological studies and research on race relations. The same can be said for sports studies. For example when applied to the domain of sport, these assumptions of critical theory can offer different explanations about how social relations can influence sport in a society and also offer different insights into how we see and think about sport.

As previously described, the interview schedule used to collect the data for this study was shaped by the literature reviewed for this study with regard to gender bias in sport. The data, once collected, was categorised into the two main themes, i.e.

differential treatment and organisational fit, as well as into the emerging theme of harassment and intimidation.

The rationale for using critical theory as an analytical tool was to offer the reader new insights into the complexities of gender and social relations of the participants' experiences within the workplace. The intention was also to offer the reader a new perspective of female's experiences of gender bias in sport. The application of the three critical theory assumptions to the findings of this study was carefully considered and decided upon before the data was collected. It was not foreseen that there would be any gaps between findings of this study and the ability to apply the assumptions of critical theory to them.



Given the nature and scope of this study, not all the data could be matched to all three assumptions of critical theory. Consequently, there were gaps in the information so that not all the assumptions could be applied to all of the themes. This was not due to any limitation in the collection of the data for this study, but was due to the fact that the data collection was shaped by the literature reviewed and not by the assumptions of critical theory.

As previously discussed in more detail in Chapter Two, critical theory can highlight the way in which sport transforms or reproduces how society operates and controls various sport forms. It can also identify the way sport does or does not focus on the needs and interests of women and other underrepresented groups who may or may not

have access to sport. In addition, critical theory highlights the way in which transformation is controlled by those who are in power and how this not only reproduces the way in which society operates and shapes women's experiences in sport, but also who controls and regulates transformation in sport. Further to this, the critical theory draws attention to particular interactions with regard to sexuality, race and gender relations in sport and enhances our understanding of power relations in sport by acknowledging that women in sport engage in a perpetual struggle of inequality.

More specifically, to this study, critical theory is useful in analysing the complexities of women's experiences of gender bias in the workplace because (1) it identifies the way in which sport highlights the needs and interests of women, as underrepresented people; (2) it focuses on how social construction is connected with social and power relations; (3) it identifies conflict and agreements and how they are reproduced through social relationships; (4) it identifies the ways in which various sectors of organisations constantly negotiate agreements and (5) it identifies how human relationships are grounded in political struggles and how social life is defined, reproduced and organised.

The first assumption that conflict and agreement exist simultaneously means that when there is disagreement within different social structures, it creates dissension within the social order. Ultimately, to resolve the issue where there are conflicting resolutions all parties have to come to an agreement. When applied to the sporting

context it could manifest itself in different forms. For example, there are conflicting views within various structures about how sport should be administered and who should administer it. When applied to the findings of this study it can offer insights about who really administers and takes authority within the workplace of these female sport administrators.

The second assumption regarding the view that shared values and agreement are never permanent means that there is an unending process of negotiation between various groups. When applied to the context of sport, this negotiation would occur between men and women in organisations in their quest to achieve and negotiate equitable dispensations for both genders in sport. When applied to the findings in this study, it can offer insights about how women in this study negotiate gender roles and decision making in their organisations.

The third assumption that the basis of conflict changes from one position to another means, that the basis for conflict would probably change based on the political, economic and historical circumstances of social life. When applied to the sport context it could manifest in a government's intention to address gender inequalities in sport as a conflicting issue due to the fact that women seem to be in an ongoing struggle for equality in sport. When applied to the findings of this study it can offer insights into how women address and deal with political historical circumstances with regard to legislative policies and harassment in their places of work.

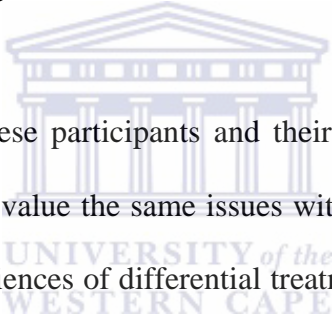
What follows is an application of these three assumptions of critical theory to the findings of this study, theme by theme.

4.7.1 Differential treatment

It is evident from the findings of this study that differential treatment exists in the organisations of these women within their workplace. A summary of the key findings regarding differential treatment shows that although all of the participants acknowledged that differential treatment exists, there is evidence to suggest that they challenged practices of differential treatment especially with regard to decision making and gender-role stereotyping. In addition, they did not allow themselves to be subjected to acts of differential treatment. More specifically, these women have demonstrated an ability to both challenge and transform the way in which society, in this regard, has shaped and operated within their specific sports code because they have not allowed themselves to be subjected to differential treatment in their places of work

In this theme of differential treatment it is evident from the responses that gender relations between the participants and their male colleagues are produced as a result of the struggle for (female) equality with their male counterparts. The gender relations in the participants' places of work are comprised of a dynamic which is characterised by conflict as well as co-operation. This is consistent with the assumption of critical theory regarding the simultaneous existence of conflict and agreement in any given organization.

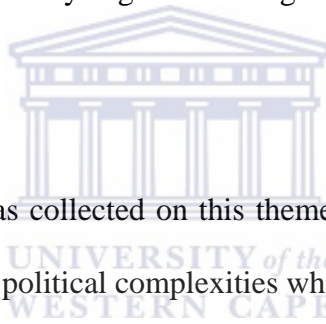
It has already been pointed out that differential treatment does in fact exist in the workplace of these sportswomen. The second assumption of critical theory is about the absence of permanency between shared values and agreement because of the need for ongoing negotiation. In this study the findings show that the continuous trivialising, de-valuing and underestimating of the competencies and abilities of the participants' to make decisions within their male dominated sports structures means that they can never take their progress towards equality for granted. It seems as if each situation has to be negotiated.



Conflict arises because these participants and their male colleagues do not always share the same opinion or value the same issues within their sports organisations. In turn, these women's experiences of differential treatment in the workplace will either negatively or positively influence the way they perceive their value within that organisation. This could change how expressions of the gender relations are illustrated between men and women in the workplace. However, although allegiances, commitment and shared values are often agreed upon, they are also often reneged upon.

From the responses regarding gender-role stereotyping, the gendered roles these participants assume in their places of work reflect the social structures present in society. This means that women often engage in activities which are gendered as female. In this study these activities included making tea and being asked to take

minutes which then made it difficult for them to be part of the discussions. When these participants engaged in such activities they felt they were being valued less than their male colleagues. The experiences of these participants reflect the dynamics of how sport reproduces, transforms and explains interactions with regard to gender relations. These female participants have worked their way into sports organisations which have been predominantly male based. They have also worked their way into positions which have traditionally been held by men. The basis for conflict might change, based on various situations within the sporting organisation, but these female administrators have to constantly negotiate their gendered roles within their organisations.



Finally, the data which was collected on this theme of differential treatment did not focus on the historical and political complexities which shaped these women's current experiences of gender bias in sport. That was beyond the scope of this study. Consequently, this assumption of critical theory regarding conflict changes and political, economic and historical circumstances of social life, could not be applied to the findings of this theme and therefore new insights in this regard cannot be offered.

In summary, from the above it can be seen that:

- 1) There are constant agreements between the participants with regard to their struggle for equality within the workplace because the relationship between these participants and their male counterparts is one which is characterised by conflict and co operation;

- 2) The shared values and experiences of these participants are devalued by some of the males in their organisations and therefore the process of negotiation in these women's pursuit for equal opportunity, fairness and impartiality with regard to decision making is fraught;
- 3) The particular interaction between these women and their male counterparts reflect the gender and power relations within sport in society. The assumption of critical theory exposes these inequalities by looking at domination and illegitimate use of power of one group over another.

4.7.2 Organisational fit

The key findings regarding organisational fit emphasised that participants in this study performed gendered activities on their own accord. In addition, they did not view themselves as token members. They also claimed that it is expected of them to work harder to prove themselves. Nevertheless, according to them, they are actually able to take authority within their sports organisations

In this theme of organisational fit the conflict experienced by these participants seems to be around the compromises they have to make. In addition there is no evidence to suggest that agreements are reached with regard to organisational fit. Consequently, the assumption of critical theory regarding the simultaneous existence of conflict and agreement is not supported by the responses pertaining to organisational fit.

The second assumption of critical theory that shared values and agreement are never permanent, is indeed applicable to this theme. From the findings it is evident that when making decisions, these female participants appear to be constantly compromising, and negotiating decision making. This highlights the fact that the needs and interests of these women as an example of an underrepresented group, are often compromised when men's experiences in sport are valued above those of women.

Although the participants in this study are able to make decisions in their organisations and are able to take authority in their places of work, all decisions made by any of them have to be ratified by the other members in their organisations, the majority of whom are males. This would ultimately mean that the location of power and conflict is either shared and/or shifted within their organisations. This further reflects the women's perpetual struggle for equality and depths they have to endure in order to reach a state of resolution.

One area where critical theory has not been useful is around the different ways in which the female participants do or do not challenge systems of domination within their sports organisations. In this regard, some women in this study have used sport as a platform for challenging existing forms of gender relations in an attempt to address the gender bias. Others, acknowledged those systems of domination, but have come to define them as correct.

Finally, the data which was collected on this theme of organisational fit did not focus on the historical and political complexities and how these can affect these participants' current experiences of gender bias in sport. That was beyond the scope of this study. Consequently, this assumption regarding conflict changes and political, economic and historical circumstances of social life could not be applied to the findings of this theme. New insights in this regard cannot, therefore, be offered.

In summary, from the above it can be seen that:

- 1) Participants in this study are constantly negotiating decision making and gender-role stereotyping because men's experiences in sport are valued above those of women;
- 2) Participants' needs and interests are compromised due to the value placed on men's experiences in sport and therefore shared values and agreement are never permanent. However, as mentioned, there is no evidence that agreement exists and the application of this assumption was not supported by the finding;
- 3) The location of conflict with regards to taking authority changes within various organisations. Therefore, because as authoritative power within organisations shift, women are not only subjected to a perpetual struggle for equality, but also their inner struggle with regard to dominance, submissiveness and powerlessness.

4.7.3 Harassment and intimidation

The key findings regarding harassment and intimidation indicated that all the participants' interpretations around harassment differed and that none of them claimed to have experienced harassment in their current place of work. Furthermore, from the responses, there seems to be a lack of awareness in the organizations themselves around the issue of harassment.

The first assumption of critical theory states that conflict and agreement exist simultaneously, which means that when there is disagreement about harassment and intimidation within sports organizations, a solution cannot emerge until both the women and men come to some agreement. The challenge in this study is that harassment and intimidation does exist in the participants' places of work, but none of them claimed to be experiencing harassment and intimidation because they have developed tools which would address any incidents. Consequently, the situation around harassment and intimidation is more complex than this assumption of critical theory might seem to suggest.

The second assumption that shared values and agreement can never be permanent because of continuous negotiation applies to this study's emerging theme of harassment and intimidation. In this study, the findings show that the way in which each of the participants dealt with harassment and intimidation in their places of work entailed an unending process of compromise and negotiation between themselves and

their male counterparts despite the fact that the participants' had developed tools to deal with such negative behaviour.

Further, this study's findings are contrary to traditional ideologies which shape our theoretical understanding of women's interactions with their male counterparts within the workplace, notably with regards to harassment and intimidation in sport. Hence this adds to our understanding of harassment and intimidation in sport in society.

Unlike the previous two themes, this theme on harassment and intimidation included data which focussed on historical and political issues around gender bias in sport. Consequently, some new insights can be offered in this regard. For example, when one examines the many political changes that have taken place in South African since 1994, one might expect to see an improvement in the status of sportswomen, regarding gender bias and especially regarding the domination of men over women. In this light the incidence of harassment and intimidation should decrease because legislation in South Africa has been implemented to prevent such discriminatory practices.

In summary, from the above it can be seen that:

- 1) Both men and women have to come to an agreement with regard to the constituents of harassment and intimidation and its complexities as women are constantly negotiating their boundaries and classification in this regard;

- 2) The system of domination of men over women in sport is slowly changing due to the shifts in the power relations between men and women in organisations as women have compromised, adapted and negotiated their positions and have learnt to efficiently deal with incidents of harassment and intimidation.

This study highlighted how the social order within sport in society comprises a gender logic which in many cases is consistent with dominant ideologies in society. The new insight this study offers is the fact that these gender ideologies are also entrenched within these women's experiences of gender bias in the sports workplace. More specifically, it shows how they are disadvantaged by this gender bias with regard to differential treatment, organisational fit and harassment and intimidation in their places of work.

Although the application of the three basic assumptions of critical theory did not offer substantially new insights with regard to the females participants' experiences of gender bias in their sports organizations, the type of data collected is a true reflection of their experiences of gender bias in the workplace and several new perspectives were gained by applying the assumption, that might otherwise not have emerged. Through its reflection of the assumptions made by critical theory, this study highlighted how complex the social and gender relations are with regard to men and women's interactions with one another. This means that the social construction is inextricably linked to the social and power relations present not only in sport in

society. To this end, conflict and agreement are reproduced through social relations present in sport as well as in society. In addition this study illustrated how these women's contributions in sport are systematically devalued. In this way, critical theory enhances and highlights the needs and interests of women as an underrepresented group. Furthermore, this study identified ways in which various sections within these women's sports organisations are constantly negotiating agreements.

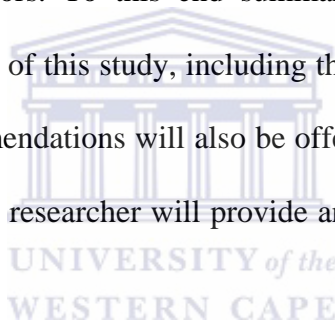
4.8 Summary of Chapter 4

This chapter discussed the participants' experiences of gender bias with specific reference to the two predetermined themes of the study i.e. differential treatment and organisational fit. Furthermore, in this chapter the participants' interpretations and experiences of an emerging theme referred to as harassment and intimidation were discussed.

In this chapter the responses from the participants showed that there were significant practices of differential treatment. Organisational fit was the second theme discussed in this chapter. In this regard, the discussion highlighted the manner in which men resist women's entry into sport, women's abilities to take authority and make decisions at their places of work, especially at the level of leadership. Harassment and intimidation was the last theme discussed in this chapter. The discussions highlighted the way the participants in this study experienced harassment and intimidation in their places of work.

Finally in this chapter, a reflection of the selected assumptions of the critical theory in relation to the findings of the female participants' experience of gender bias in the workplace was offered. The section highlighted where various assumptions of the critical theory matched the findings of this study and where it did not.

The next and final chapter outlines the key findings for each theme and offers conclusions and recommendations with regard to gender bias in the workplace of female sports administrators. To this end summaries and conclusions are drawn around each of the themes of this study, including the emerging theme of harassment and intimidation. Recommendations will also be offered in relation to the findings of this study. In addition, the researcher will provide an overview of her experiences of qualitative research.



CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The focus of this study was guided by the research objective which was to investigate the experiences of female sport administrators with regards to gender bias in the workplace. This research document consists of five chapters. In Chapter One the researcher provided a background, introduction and motivation for doing this study. It highlighted the complexities of women's experiences with regard to gender bias in the workplace. Chapter Two offered a literature review which explored females' experiences of gender bias with regard to differential treatment and organisational fit. Methodological considerations were outlined in Chapter Three and highlighted the importance of using a qualitative approach in capturing the participants' experiences of gender bias in the workplace. In Chapter Four the study results were described and discussed and the relevance of the critical theory as a sociological perspective for interpreting the findings was explained. This final chapter outlines the key findings for each theme and offers conclusions and recommendations with regard to gender bias in the sport workplace.

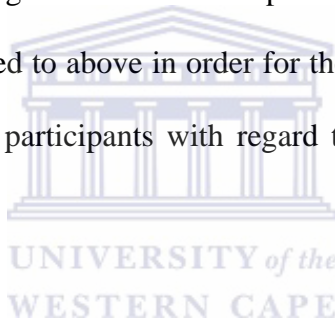
For this study the qualitative approach was selected. The researcher compiled an interview schedule relating to gender bias in the workplace of female sport leaders in order to conceptualise and create a framework for this study, using two predetermined themes as indicated by the literature i.e. differential treatment and organisational fit.

These themes in turn, each had several sub themes e.g. practices of differential treatment, gender-role stereotyping, experiences of resistance and exclusion, decision making, absence of women in leadership positions and tokenism. The researcher identified one emerging theme comprising two aspects i.e. namely harassment and intimidation.

5.2 FINDINGS RELATED TO DIFFERENTIAL TREATMENT

5.2.1 Summary of research findings

The summary of the findings which follows is presented within the framework of the themes of the study referred to above in order for the reader to get a coherent picture of the experiences of the participants with regard to gender bias in their places of work.



5.2.2 Differential treatment

This first theme highlighted the participants' experiences and interpretations of being subjected to differential treatment. This was done by exploring the theme in the following ways:

- 1) Whether the participants felt that they were treated differently because they were women;
- 2) Whether the participants felt their views, comments and suggestions were acknowledged;
- 3) Whether the participants had ascribed to certain gender roles.

A definition by Weiler (2004) refers to differential treatment as a form of discrimination on the basis of race, religion, age, origin disability and gender. For the purposes of this study, the interpretation of differential treatment as offered by Weiler was utilised.

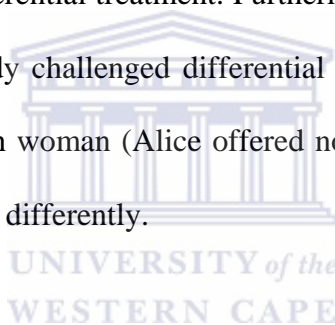
From the participants' experiences of differential treatment, the following key findings were raised:

- 1) All the participants acknowledged that differential treatment does exist in their places of work.
- 2) Even though differential does exist in the workplace of these participants, there is evidence to suggest that the participants do challenge practices of differential treatment and they do not allow it impact on their work.
- 3) There are various factors which influence and shape the participants' experiences of practices of differential treatment, especially with regard to decision making and gender-role stereotyping.
- 4) When the participants in this study perform activities gendered as female in their workplace they appear to do so of their own accord.

Findings indicate that participants in this study experienced differential treatment directly or indirectly and that differential treatment exists in the workplace of these female sport administrators. These participants work do not feel valued in ways equal to the way they observe their male counterparts being valued. This includes catering

for their needs and interests. This is especially true when they were of the opinion that they are not taken seriously as sport leaders because of apparent assumptions that others might have that as women, their family commitments and domestic responsibilities outside the workplace which they prioritize over their involvement in sport.

Although it appears that differential treatment does exist in the workplace of these female sport administrators, there is evidence that these women are able to diligently deal with practices of differential treatment. Furthermore the findings show that three of the women in this study challenged differential treatment practices especially in the boardroom. The fourth woman (Alice) offered no insight or personal accounts as to whether she was treated differently.

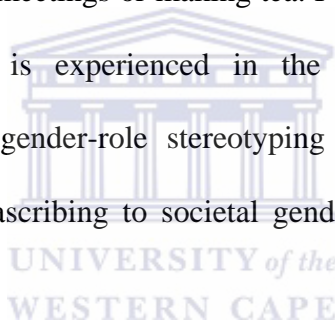


She suggested that women in her organisation, as well as herself, were not treated differently on the basis of gender, and therefore she, nor the rest of the women in her organisation, are faced with the same challenges as the other three participants. It seems that when the participants' challenge their male counterparts on issues related to differential treatment, then the incidents did not decrease but instead became increasingly more subtle and covert.

Findings in this study also show that various factors may influence the way in which these women experience differential treatment in their places of work. For example the organisational structures in which these women work seem to reflect social

structures within society. This could be due to the fact that historically many men are in dominant positions most sports structures in South Africa while women hold less valued positions within the same sports organizations. This is an example of a legacy of dominance which is perpetuated within the sporting environment.

With regard to gender-role stereotyping, the findings in this study show that there is a trend which exists in sport organisations whereby there is an expectation from male co-workers that female participants in this study are expected to perform activities such as taking minutes in meetings or making tea. For one participant, namely Dolly, gender-role stereotyping is experienced in the home. The remainder of the participants experienced gender-role stereotyping in the workplace and without realizing that they were ascribing to societal gender roles which are set aside for women.



The findings of this study regarding the experiences of differential treatment in the places are supported by the research of Acosta and Carpenter (1994) and by Nath (2000) who similarly found that women are mistakenly stereotyped as being less knowledgeable and less competent than men in the workplace. The findings are also supported by Coakley's (1998) research regarding the way women are seen as less qualified as their male counterparts and therefore treated and valued less and by the work of Eitzen and Sage (1997) who reported that the gender roles ascribed to women as home-makers and child bearers (mothers) often bias the views that men have of their female colleagues.

5.3 FINDINGS RELATED TO ORGANISATIONAL FIT.

5.3.1 Organisational Fit

This second theme highlighted the participants' experiences and interpretations of being subjected to organisational fit. This was done by exploring the theme in the following ways:

- 1) Whether men resist(ed) the participants' entry into the sport leadership realm;
- 2) Whether the participants are excluded from taking decisions about certain issues in the workplace;
- 3) Whether the participants can exercise authority at work;
- 4) Whether they have to work harder to prove their ability and to be valued;
- 5) Whether they are token members in their place of work.



For the purposes of this study, the interpretation of organisational fit as offered by Cassel and Walsh (as cited in Simpson, 2000) has been adopted. According to them, organisational fit refers to the level of comfort or discomfort experienced by women in their organisations. For the purposes of this study, this interpretation of organisational fit will be utilised.

From the participants' experiences of organisational fit, the following key findings were raised:

- 1) Participants in this study are expected to work harder to prove themselves and yet felt that not all had men resisted their entry into the realm of sports leadership.
- 2) Participants in this study do not view themselves as token members in their organisations.
- 3) Participants in this study have the authority in their places of work and are included in the decision making of all issues as relevant to their position in the organization.

Findings in this study show that not all men within the participants' sport organisations resist these women's entry into sport. However, the experiences of two participant's, namely Dolly and Aeysha, suggest that men in their organisations feel threatened by and are challenged by women, especially educated women.

The findings in this study also indicate that with regards to tokenism, the experiences of these participants are not that of token members. They attributed this to the fact that they have knowledge, experience and expertise in the field of sport which moves them beyond being labelled as a token administrator. According to the participants they have earned the right to be in the position based on merit.

Findings in this study indicate that there is no evidence to suggest that participants in this study are lacking opportunities to make decisions in their organisations and are

able to take authority in their places of work. All of the participants in this study indicated that they are part of the decision making process in their organisations.

Simpson (2000) claimed that the dynamics around organisational fit fluctuate from being non-threatening for females to the extreme of being sexist and hostile. Foster (1999:316) referred to the difficulty women have in accessing authority positions, because, she claimed that in a “patriarchal structure, (like sport), the official authority is predominantly in the hands of men”. Hargreaves and Jones (2001) attributed the lack of women in sport leadership positions in South Africa to a combination of race, ethnicity, class and gender.



5.4 FINDINGS RELATED TO HARASSMENT AND INTIMIDATION.

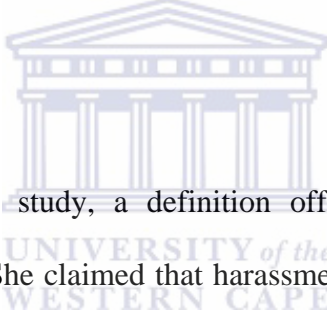
5.4.1 Harassment and Intimidation

The emerging theme has two interrelated aspects i.e. harassment and intimidation.

As mentioned in Chapter Four, this theme emerged out of questions which were presented to the participant's during the first round of interviews. As the researcher, while decoding the transcripts from the interviews, I found that the participants mentioned feeling intimidated at times. I explored this further and the theme of harassment and intimidation emerged. In this section harassment will be discussed and then intimidation.

In the following summary, the key findings regarding harassment and intimidation are highlighted.

- 1) All the participants' interpretations around harassment differed which impacted on their perceptions as to whether they had experienced harassment or not.
- 2) Although some of the participant's had experienced harassment previously, none of them had experienced it in their current place of work.
- 3) There is a lack of awareness around issues of harassment by the participants.
- 4) There is inconclusive evidence regarding the intimidation and the participants although they have witnessed acts of intimidation at their places of work.



For the purposes of this study, a definition offered by Simelane (2001:6) for harassment was adopted. She claimed that harassment included sexual conduct of an *“unwelcomed and unwanted”* nature. These, according to her included *“verbal comments, abuse, gestures or physical contact”*. These need to be *“of a sexual nature”* to be viewed as harassment and may be made individually or by a group and *“judged by the recipient(s) to have resulted in...mental, physical or social discomfort, demotion”* and to have created *“an intimidating or hostile environment”*

The findings of this study show that there are varied and diverse views on what constitutes harassment. Consequently, the participants' claims about their experiences of harassment can be found in the interpretation thereof because this influences their

willingness to acknowledge whether they have or have not experienced forms of harassment.

The findings of this study also indicate that some of the participants in this study have experienced harassment in the past, but whilst working in other sport organisations. Although these women do not experience harassment in their sport organisations i.e. their places of work, they have witnessed other female colleagues being harassed by males.

Furthermore, there appears to be a lack of awareness around the issue of harassment in the participants' workplaces. Consequently, harassment might indeed be more prevalent in the workplace, but the general absence of reporting procedures and harassment policies makes it difficult to come to any conclusion in this regard.

Further to the issue of harassment, the findings of this study indicate that three of the women in this study, namely, Dolly, Aeysha and Noleen, have experienced incidents of intimidation. According to Randall (nd), intimidation is practiced and used as a weapon by men to discourage women from sport. From the findings, none of them allowed themselves to feel intimidated by their male co workers and are not 'discouraged', as described by Randall (nd), from their involvement in sport and are able to ensure that acts of intimidation in their places of work are not entertained.

Fasting (2005) found that as female athletes grow older, they become more adept at protecting themselves and are able to avoid or escape potentially dangerous harassment circumstances which they may experience. This seems true for this study as well. It appears although the participants have experienced intimidation in the past, they currently do not allow themselves to feel intimidated by their male co workers. This does not mean that attempts at intimidating them are absent from their sport' places of work. It is important to highlight the fact that in the case of Alice, she could not give any personal accounts of intimidation, but did refer to what she observed in her organisations.

It would seem that all the participants have developed some ways of dealing with practices of harassment and intimidation. This could be attributed to the fact that they were all sportswomen when they were younger. This study did, however, not explore this possibility.

5.5 Conclusions related to the research findings

This study set out to examine the research question: What are female sport administrators' experiences of gender bias in their places of work?

To this end participants were interviewed using one-on-one individual interview schedules comprising 18 key questions covering various issues relevant to gender bias experiences. Some of the questions included: Do you feel that you are treated differently because you are a woman? At committee meeting; are your views,

comments or suggestions acknowledged? Do you think men resist women's entry into sport? What is your definition of harassment? Can you make decisions within this organisation? Are you able to take authority at work? Do you feel that there are certain gender-roles imposed on you simply because you are female? See Appendix B for key questions.

From the findings it can be concluded that:

- 1) There is no conclusive evidence that women in this study have negative experiences of organisational fit. However, there is evidence to suggest that the dynamics around organisational fit are complex, especially when it comes to decision making.
- 2) There is inconclusive evidence as to whether men resist(ed) these women's entry into sport, but there is evidence of behaviour by some of the participants' male counterparts which are aligned with societal practices which preclude women from entry into sport at a leadership level.
- 3) It not conclusive whether gender-role stereotyping is carried over from the home into the workplace but there is evidence that the participants perform tasks outside their places of work that are gendered as female.
- 4) From the findings, it can be concluded that the participants in this study are not token members of the organisations in which they work.

5) From the findings, it can be concluded that the participants, do not experience harassment in their places of work. There is inconclusive evidence to make any claims regarding the existence of harassment practices in the organisations in which these participants are leaders. However, there is evidence that behaviours which constitute intimidation are prevalent.

5.6 Researcher's experience of the qualitative process

As the researcher, I believe that the use of the qualitative approach was undoubtedly the best approach for this study because of the nature of information sought and the complexities of women's experiences of gender bias in their places of work, and varied interpretations, held by the participants, of concepts related to gender bias. In addition, the in-depth individual interviews allowed for further probing and for providing opportunities for the participants to express themselves and request clarity where applicable.

It was useful to have two pre-determined themes, guided by the literature review, as these themes assisted in the organization of the vast amount of data collected. Although specific questions formed the framework for the interview schedule, enough opportunity was made available for additional meaningful and relevant information to be gathered. This allowed for the emergence of any additional themes pertinent to gender bias and relevant to the research focus of this study. It was in this way that the additional theme of harassment and intimidation emerged. What

facilitated the process was the willingness of the participants for the sessions to be tape recorded. It is important to note, that the findings of this research study apply only to the experiences of a set of purposefully selected participants and therefore generalisations cannot be made to the entire Western Cape population of female sports administrators.

Increasing the amount of quotes and narratives from the participants might have brought more clarity on each of the themes but this might also have reduced the analysis in this study to a descriptive level.

When as the researcher, I started this research study, I had a perception that men intentionally discriminated against women in the workplace, especially within the sporting context. This was a bias based on personal experience as a sportswoman and someone who had served in leadership positions in sport. This perception has been changed by the results of this study. While gender bias certainly exists in the workplace, my viewpoint has changed and from the results I acknowledged that gender bias is not deliberately intended by male co workers. However, from the results there is some indication that men's actions and attitudes which devalue women as leaders in the workplace are not intentional. This does not detract from the fact that men seem to ascribe to some behaviours which were consistent with gender roles, contribute to the perpetuation gender bias.

From my experience in this study, I found, as the researcher, that during the interview process as well as the data analysis, the participants did not always acknowledge that gender bias existed in their organisations. This perhaps could be due to the fact that they were unaware that gender bias existed, ignored it or were in denial that it existed in their sport organisations. When I conducted the interviews and later read the transcripts, it was clear that it does exist.

One issue which could have been further explored is that of gender-role stereotyping. Further exploration of this issue around might have enhanced our understanding of the inter-related aspects in women's lives as gender roles they ascribe to in their homes, spills over into the workplace of both the men and women. Further, it would show the complexities around the relationship between a woman as a mother and as a leader and the meanings that are attributed to each of these in the workplace.

As a researcher, I acknowledge that there are many shortcomings or oversights in this study. In the exploration of gender bias in this study, as a researcher I did not explore the possibility that gender bias could actually work to the advantage of females. Although by definition biasness could be referred to as prejudice, favouritism and unfairness, I did not take into account that employment equity or affirmative action posts could act in favour of women. This is not really relevant in organisations which are predominantly female such as netball and softball in which two of the four participants hold leadership positions.

This being said, as a researcher, it never occurred to me while constructing the methodology for this study, that a content analysis of the transcribed interviews could also be useful, possibly more so than a thematic analysis. Having said that, if I had the opportunity to redo this study, I would not choose a content analysis, but I would rather collect data within the framework of the critical theory.

The 18 core questions, as stated in Appendix B, appear at a glance to indicate that the interview schedule for this study included only closed-ended questions. However, this is deceiving, as the core questions were accompanied by additional questions, such as, “In what way?”, “How did it make you feel” and “Can you offer an example” and therefore the participants were required to offer some explanation and additional information. A recommendation for future studies would be to list under each core question a comprehensive set of probing questions.

In the organisation, discussion and interpretation of the data, the themes of gender bias, as emerged in the review of literature were used. This, I felt as the researcher, did not compromise the voices of the participants as many quotations may have been included and the point of departure for each section was to offer a summary of what the participant had to say, which was then followed by an unpacking of this summary which included numerous quotations. The literature has been used to offer a context for the responses, not to replace them.

Another shortcoming of this study is possibly that, as the researcher, I could have challenged the participants' views further, but due to my inexperience as a researcher, I missed the opportunity and foresight to do so. This might have been an opportunity missed, but does not detract from the rich data and valuable information gathered about experiences these women have when they are confronted with differential treatment, organisational fit and harassment and intimidation in the workplace. This study provided useful information with regards to gender bias in the workplace. Amongst others, it highlights the fact that female sport leaders and administrators cope with gender bias in different ways.

5.7 Recommendations

The following recommendations are being made on the basis of the findings with regard to gender bias in the workplace of these participants;

- Participants in this study demonstrated skills and tools they have used to manage gender bias in their places of work. This indicates how important knowledge and experience is in gaining confidence to manage gender bias. It is therefore recommended that leadership and mentoring programmes should be offered to women in leadership positions and for women who are in prospective leadership positions. This will better empower and equip them with the skills necessary to deal with and transform incidents of gender bias. It will also help them become more confident in themselves and their ability

as leaders and possibly make themselves less vulnerable to gender bias practices, especially harassment and intimidation.

- The participants indicated that it would be helpful if awareness is created around harassment. In some sport organisations there are no harassment policies or procedures and as such, more women are open to harassment and intimidation. National government could enforce stronger legislative policies which will create awareness around and address issues of harassment and intimidation.
- Some of the participants alluded to the fact that male sport receives more funding than female sport. In addition, if there is an increase in the number of women who participate in sport, more funding can be secured. However, since there are more men participating in sport than women, financial assistance should be readily available to women for development of the women in sport and this would in turn allow them to exercise more control regarding the taking of authority in the sporting workplace.
- Participants highlighted the importance of abiding by the constitution and therefore sport organisations should review constitutions more regularly to ensure observation of protocol. In this way, they will abide by their constitution which would ultimately create a forum whereby the opportunities given to both men and women will be equal.
- Although some opportunities were missed in the exploration of gender-role stereotyping, more research needs to be conducted to unravel the

complexities with regards to the way in which men and women interact in the workplace.

- The experiences of female sport administrators needs to be explored in a more comprehensive study and could utilize the assumptions of the critical theory as part of the data collection process.

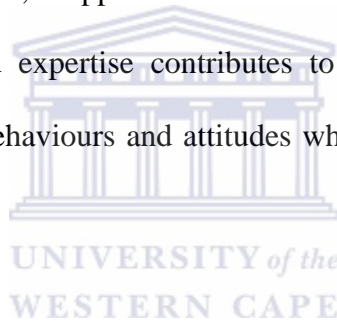
5.8 Concluding summary

Although the objectives of this study have been met, it is imperative that more research be conducted to further explore South African female administrator's experiences of gender bias in the workplace with specific reference to harassment and intimidation and gender-role stereotyping in the home and the workplace. There is clear evidence to suggest that the females in this study experienced gender bias in the workplace with regard to differential treatment, organisational fit and harassment and intimidation. Although there are few participants, there is valuable information emerging from this study which does contribute meaningfully to our understanding of female sport administrators' experiences of gender bias in their places of work.

In this study, the literature themes around gender bias were used to collect the data while the assumptions of critical theory were applied to the findings in an attempt to offer new insights regarding gender bias in sports organizations. In this instance applying critical theory only to the findings did not deliver the many new insights which were expected. This might not have been the case if the assumptions had been used as a framework for collecting the data. Therefore, based on the researchers'

experiences in this study, it can be recommended that for future studies, if researchers wish to interpret the findings of their studies on gender bias and female sports administrators, that they also use that theory as a framework for collecting the data. Such an approach will not necessarily gather more valid or richer data, but will facilitate the application of the assumptions relevant to the chosen theory and will most likely generate new insights when applied to the findings.

From this study it can be seen that gender bias exists in the sport organisations of these participants. However, it appears that these women are of strong character and that their experience and expertise contributes to the ease with which they can challenge practices and behaviours and attitudes which promote gender bias in their places of work.



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APPENDIX A



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LETTER OF CONSENT

20th February 2007

***AN EXPLORATION OF THE EXPERIENCES OF FEMALE SPORTS
ADMINISTRATORS IN THE WESTERN CAPE: GENDER BIAS IN THE
WORKPLACE.***

Dear Participant

The Department of Sport, Recreation and Exercise Science at the University of the Western Cape would like to request your participation in a research study which will explore the experiences of female sports administrators in the Western Cape with regard to their perceptions and experiences of gender bias in the workplace. If you are willing to participate in this research project, you will be asked to participate in a one-on-one interview. Participation is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time. Information provided will be treated with the strictest of confidentiality and your identity will be protected at all times.

The interview will be between 60 – 90 minutes long. The discussion will be recorded using an audio-tape and at any moment you may ask for it to be switched off. Your name will not be recorded anywhere and no one will be able to link you to specific comments.

If you agree to participate in this research project you will be invited to read the report before the findings are distributed. If you are willing to be a part of this study please sign this consent form in the space provided below and return it to me.

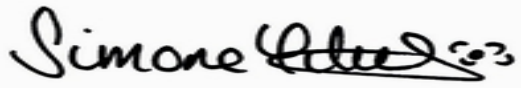
If you have any questions or complaints about this study, you may contact Simone Titus on 959 2281

Statement of agreement to participate in the research study

I, -----, am willing to participate in the project. I understand that participation is voluntary, that I may withdraw at any time, that the responses will be treated with confidence, and that names will not be linked to specific responses.

Date:----- Signature of participant:-----

The extra copy of the consent form, which is attached, is for your records.



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APPENDIX B

Core Questions

Differential Treatment

1. Do you feel that you are subject to differential treatment on the basis of gender?

Practices of differential treatment

2. At committee meetings; are your views, comments or suggestions often acknowledged?
3. Are you subject to repeated jokes or have your body commented on, by your male counterparts?
4. Do you know whether or not there is an income difference in terms of remuneration

Tokenism

5. Do you feel you are taken as seriously as your male counterparts?
6. Do you feel that you are a token member of this organisation?

Gender-role stereotyping

7. Do you feel that there are certain gender roles imposed on you simply because you are female? E.g. are you repeatedly asked to make coffee or tea? If yes, are you comfortable with this?

Organisational fit

8. Do you think that men resist women's entry into sport?
9. Do you feel that you have to work harder to prove your credibility?
10. Do you feel that you are excluded from certain business discussions because these take place at / in forums which potentially preclude women, for example, the golf course or the toilet?
11. Do you feel that you lack decision making power?
12. Are you able to take authority at work

Females as leaders and administrators

13. What is your perception of female managers in sport?
14. Would you work for a female administrator / leader?

15. To what do you attribute the general absence of women in leadership positions in sport?

Harassment

16. Do you experience any other forms of harassment

17. Do you feel intimidated by some of your male co workers?

18. Are you satisfied with your job?

